PRIMARY SCHOOLS' EFFORTS TO RAISE LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE IN KWEKWE, ZIMBABWE

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

The work contained in this dissertation was completed by the author at the University of KwaZulu-Natal between July 2015 and June 2023. It is original work and the reference is made where other people's work is used. The work will not, and has not been submitted for any award in any university or for any diploma or any degree except the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Signature Octavia Ndlovu

Date June 2023

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While I admit that this was one of the longest, loneliest and most treacherous educational journeys that I have ever embarked on, it would be folly not to acknowledge the assistance, encouragement and wise counsel I received along the way.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all the teachers out there who work tirelessly to raise the academic performance of their learners. I salute you teachers!

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to explore primary school's efforts to raise learners' academic performance in Kwekwe district, Zimbabwe. It centred on the efforts by teachers in three primary schools to raise their learners' academic performance against the backdrop of results-based management (RBM) and a new curriculum (introduced progressively since 2017). The results based management approach in education sector seeks to improve service delivery and produce credible learner academic performance results. These efforts were found to be spearheaded by individual teachers in consultation with school management and they became the unit of analysis. Expectancy theory of Motivation, Factor theory of Motivators and Performance Improvement theory were theories providing a framework to understand teachers' efforts. Curriculum Change Management theory informed teachers' behaviour in curriculum implementation. An interpretive research paradigm using a qualitative approach was employed. A multi-case study was undertaken, using semi- structured interviews, observations and document reviews. Thematic content analysis was used. The findings revealed novel ideas like holiday camps, extra morning lessons and project-based learning as strategies for improving learners' academic performance. There were also mixed feelings about RBM and a lack of ownership by teachers of the new curriculum. There was a deeply embedded results orientation to lessons as prescribed by the dictates of RBM, which led to ***maladaptive teaching*** which promoted purely ***instrumental rather than intrinsic educational values***. The study established 5 pathways for academic performance improvement in schools. A framework of redress is proposed based on 4 avenues of justice for the schools: recognitional, procedural, distributive and compensatory.

Key Words: learners' academic performance, motivation, strategies, results orientation.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADBG	African Development Bank Group
ADBG	African Development Bank Group
ADKAR	Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability and Reinforcement
APACPSE	American Psychological Association Coalition for Psychology in Schools and Education
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education For All
IRBM	Integrated Results Based Management
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
PIM	Performance Improvement Model
RBM	Results Based Management
SDC	School Development Committee
STEM	Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics
UNDP	United National Development Programme
USA	United States of America
ZIMSEC	Zimbabwe School Examination Council

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CHAPTER ONE:
PHENOMENON AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The phenomenon for this study is primary schools' efforts to raise learners' academic performance in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe against a backdrop of results-based management (RBM) policy implementation. I explore this phenomenon with teachers who were teaching grade seven learners whilst implementing an old curriculum and affected by results based management and grade three teachers who were implementing a new curriculum as well as affected by RBM.

Schools all over the world have become assessment and results oriented; it is a global trend that has gained momentum in recent years (McKinsey, 2007; Norviewu-Morty, 2012; Young et al., 2014; Lynch, 2019). A recent local study on the quality of education in Zimbabwean primary schools (Garira et al., 2019) also points to this trend: it was guided by the schools' academic efforts and achievements, indicating an inclination towards results orientation. The neighbouring South African department of education applauded the classes of 2020-2021 for posting the best results amidst the Covid-19 disruptions, again indicating an emphasis on academic results as the measure of scholarly success. Similarly, the United States (in April 2022) released school rankings of 2022 indicating the best high schools based on science, mathematics and reading scores, further validating the emphasis on academic results.

Zimbabwean primary schools have become exceedingly results focused more so in the millennium 2000 (EFA Committee, 2000; Kanyongo, 2005; Mpepereki, 2019). This study was prompted by the results orientation in Zimbabwe's primary schools and the efforts which the schools have made to raise the performance of their learners given this context of assessment

with a focus on achieving results. As a practicing teacher and researcher, a key question has always been: What are schools and teachers doing to achieve the expected good results? It is therefore against this backdrop of RBM, instituted by Zimbabwe's ministry of education that I embarked upon this research. The research focuses on teaching approaches, programmes and methodologies that schools are using to attain good results. Effective teaching approaches and strategies are linked to the quality of instruction (Mckinsey, 2007**,** p. 1 in Charturvedi et al., 2021). Barker and Mourshed (2007, p. 31 in Millillin et al., 2021) reiterate that the quality of an education system leans on the quality of instruction / teaching. The notion of quality instruction therefore becomes an integral component in a results orientation approach taken by a department of education in a country such as Zimbabwe) and the public schools that fall within its jurisdiction. Learner performance can be linked to the quality of instruction (Muzira & Bondai, 2020). This brings to the fore, the concept of performance measurement which aligns to the quality of instruction.

1.2 Performance Measurement and Effective Schools

It has been repeatedly argued by some scholars that the acquisition of an education can only be measured by the test scores which an individual attains (Schomoker, 2011; Young et al., 2014; Crouzevialle & Butera, 2017; Chartuverdi et al., 2021). It is assumed that, when learners perform well, it is evidence of them having received quality instruction. This implies that there is a correlation (a causal relationship) between quality instruction and good performance in test scores. This thinking has led to the results orientation evident in schools today all over the world. It has started the latest trend on assessment in education. Schlechty (2015, p. 110 in George, 2020) contends that "School systems must create a culture that places value on managing by results, rather than on managing by program…It is essential that school leaders work to establish a culture where results are carefully assessed and actions are taken based on these assessments." Implied in this contention is the idea that schools are now focused on the

results obtained by the learners. Assessments have become an integral part of quality instruction as it informs the development of new instructional and learning strategies. This is the case in Zimbabwe, a developing country and many developed countries as well such as the United Kingdom and United States of America. Schools all over the world are working in an effort to raise the performance of their learners through a variety of programmes, methods and strategies so as to meet the demands of society and to be deemed 'effective', in line with global trends (Crouzevialle & Butera, 2017; Porter, 2020). Therefore, today's so called 'effective' schools are defined by the performance results of their learners (Fitchett & Heafner, 2018; George, 2020). According to Black and William (2018) and Millillin et al. (2021), schools the world over, work towards the attainment of good academic results, which appears to have become the ultimate goal of education. On that note, schools that post the best academic results of their learners are labeled as effective, reputable and esteemed schools (Mundondo et al., 2019; Khun-Inkeeree et al., 2022).

It is valuable to paint the background to the current Zimbabwean education system and the results orientation to better understand the phenomenon. Also, it informs the discourses on results orientation, the phenomenon of this study.

1.3 BACKGROUND

The background to the Zimbabwean results oriented education system necessitates discussions on the need for effective strategies of improving learner performance and the new curriculum implementation (since Grade 3 teachers were also faced with this simultaneously).

1.3.1 Results Orientation

Academic success is the most important aspect of schooling and it is averred that successful schools ensure that all learners have access to high quality instruction that enables them to reach high learning goals (Khun-Inkeeree et al., 2022). Education for All (EFA) (2000) and the Education Strategic Plan (2016-2020) details that Zimbabwe's education system was highly

academic and assessment driven. Gutuza (2016) and Garira et al. (2019) contend that Zimbabwean schools pride and rank themselves on their academic results. Parents are stakeholders in education (Pazvakavambwa, 2015; Muzira & Bondai, 2020) and they expect good results at the end of each grade level and more so in the national Grade 7 examination, which is the final primary school assessment. High schools select form one candidates on the basis of their Grade 6 or 7 results and as such there is pressure on primary schools to produce learners with excellent results in these grades to secure the learners' placement in highly reputable secondary schools (Makaye, 2014; Marovah et al., 2020).

1.3.2 Origins of Results Orientation

The concept of results orientation has permeated through most of Zimbabwe' educational institutions and on that premise Mpepereki (2019) narrates that the origins of the results orientation approach in Zimbabwe commenced at independence in 1980. Similar to most developing countries, it can be traced to a reformed education system to align with the policy of "Education for All" adopted at independence. This then necessitated an expansion of the education system by building schools in previously marginalized areas and disadvantaged urban centres, accelerating the training of teachers and providing teaching and learning materials for free to the schools (Chinyani, 2013; Zimbabwe Education Overview, 2022). Pazvakavambwa (2015), in agreement with Kanyongo (2005, p. 66), relates that this expansion, namely the widening of access to learners was paralleled with addressing untrained teachers. This hurriedly led to training teachers and equipping them with minimal teaching methodologies and the provision of substandard learning materials to primary schools which compromised the quality of education (Chinyani, 2013; Makaye, 2014; Gutuza, 2016; Muzira & Bondai, 2020). Thus initially, the emphasis was not so much on the provision of a quality education but rather on the accessibility to education for learners who were previously denied this opportunity during colonisation.

According to Gutuza (2016), from 1990 to 2001 there were shifts that occurred and the

educational reforms focused more on the relevance and quality of education and training. This period saw a dramatic increase in the proportion of suitably trained teachers in primary schools grow from 51% to 77%. The focus then began to extend to quality performance in respect of results that is to what was being mooted as meaningful, measurable and tangible performance output (Education Strategic Plan, 2016-2020). This period also witnessed the localization of the country's examinations. Mavhiki (as cited in Muzira & Bondai 2020) highlights that an Act of Parliament created the Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC) to administer and manage all the country's primary and secondary education examinations which were previously set and marked by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) in the United Kingdom. However, Gutuza (2016) and Garira et al. (2019) contend that in as much as the localization of the examinations helped to cut costs by eliminating the need for foreign currency with which to undertake the examination processes; it compromised the quality of the examinations and affected learners' performance. This was evidenced by the compound effects of ZIMSEC inefficiencies and the reported sporadic leaks of examination papers as some examiners had close links with some candidates or particular schools (ZIMSEC,
2020). As alluded to initially, the main purpose of the primary school grade seven examinations is the certification of the learners' level of achievement which is used for selection of students into secondary education especially into high ranking private, mission and government schools where there is tough learner competition for entry. Therefore, an emphasis on high quality performance in the assessments thus became the driver for all education stake holders.

1.3.3 Effects of ZIMSEC Inefficiencies

The inefficiencies of ZIMSEC evidenced earlier had dire consequences on the education system's service delivery and transparency by the stakeholders. Mavhiki (as cited in Muzira and Bondai 2020) claims that the inefficiency of ZIMSEC led to the erosion of confidence that the public had in the education system and it led to the end of a number of provisions. Many

subsidies in basic services and commodities by the government were scrapped and this forced schools to operate on limited budgets, requiring them to be cost effective, accountable and transparent (Madhekeni, 2012; Mundondo et al., 2019). Schools had to produce credible outcomes and good results to appease the communities and stakeholders who were now funding and subsidizing education. This came at a time when there was a public outcry on poor service delivery, a lack of transparency and accountability in all government departments (Pazvakavambwa, 2015; Maposa, 2016; Education Strategic Plan, 2016-2020). The government responded by introducing the results based management system (discussed below) in all its ministries including education to address the concerns raised by the public. The Ministry of Education therefore put in place an appraisal system for each teacher in schools where teachers are remunerated on the basis of the average pass rate in their classes, aptly called 'results based management' (RBM).

1.3.4 The Results Based Management (RBM) Rationale

The Government of Zimbabwe embarked on a multi-year programme to design, introduce and successfully implement an integrated RBM programme across government ministries in 2005. Madhekeni (2012, p. 122) confirms that "this came as a response to reform the policies and practices of its public sectors because of the growing concerns and pressure from internal and external stakeholders for the government to produce the tangible results." Public sector organisations such as schools came under serious public scrutiny because of the lack of transparency in government systems, high unemployment rates, the rising national debt and poor service delivery (Pazvakavambwa, 2015; Dandira et al., 2020). This collectively led to the acceleration of the RBM system in the public sector (Vahamaki et al., 2019).

According to Perrin (2006, p.22 in Dandira et al., 2020), the need for RBM was increased in the public sector because it "clarifies an organization's clients, specifies the results to be achieved, connects budget allocation to output-outcome delivery and demands meritocracy in

the management of human resources." Hence the allocation of a per capita grant to schools and salary advancement for teachers in Zimbabwe is now determined by the quality of learners' performance evidenced by the results which they produce (Gutuza, 2016; Mundondo et al., 2019). Mayne (2007, p. 88 in Mundondo et al., 2019) acknowledged that the outcomes or results orientation is now a permanent feature in public sector management since it is perceived as pivotal for successful governance. RBM is therefore a management tool meant to ensure the realisation of changes in the manner in which organisations like schools are managed. The focus enshrined in the main objective is that of achieving better performance in terms of learners' results. Mayne (2007) further noted that the RBM approach gave a coordinated framework for long term planning of improvement and implementation strategies and allowed organisations to learn from their experiences. Mayne's assertions have also been reiterated by Mandeya (2015), Maposa (2016) and Dandira et al. (2020). The RBM ethos therefore requires a paradigm shift in the manner in which school heads and teachers define their school targets and it is perceived as an investment in an effort on raising learners' performance levels. Madhekeni (2012, p. 123 in Mundondo et al., 2019) confirms that the RBM approach allows schools to "measure performance regularly and objectively, learn from performance information, make adjustments and improve efficiency and effectiveness of school programmes." Implied herein is the need for a mind-set of continually assessing and putting in place strategies on a trial and error basis until 'the strategies' for excellent results are established for the school.

More broadly, Kussek and Rist (2004, p. 32 in Dandira et al., 2020) explain that RBM is "a powerful tool that can be used to help policy makers and decision makers track progress and demonstrate the impact of the given policy, programme or project." This explanation was also shared by Mandeya (2015), Mutambatuwisi (2016) and Mundondo et al. (2019) who explain RBM as a management strategy aimed at achieving important changes in the way organisations

operate, with improving performance in terms of results as the central orientation. Consequently, the ministries of education also adopted the RBM approach in schools and classrooms as a tool to measure and improve the academic results of the learners. Hence, the remuneration of its civil servants (teachers) now hinges on the pass rate of the individual teacher's class.

RBM derives from the public sector and Madhekeni (2012, p. 123) discussed the need for the RBM system in Zimbabwe's public sector institutions by outlining its scope, foci and loci, explaining that "RBM focuses the public sector on tangible results to be delivered, clarifies programme clients and their needs, promotes systematic performance analysis and benchmarking to drive programme performance and improvement." Pazvakavambwa (2015, p. 62) also adds that RBM emphasized the value for money used in limited resources, moved agents away from input-driven incremental budgets towards results-driven performance budgets, and shifted away from workload and activity completion towards results-driven performance. This means that RBM does not only focus on work done and completed but also on the quality of the results from that work. Therefore, in schools, this means that it's not only about quality teaching, this quality teaching must be evidenced in the quality of the learners' results. Schools and teachers are thus expected to produce good results. It is against the backdrop of the RBM and the new curriculum that schools are now under pressure and under observation to improve, produce and maintain good results (Madhekeni, 2012; Pazvakavambwa, 2015; Mundondo et al., 2019).

The Government of Zimbabwe RBM Programme Document (2004, p. 6) outlines the multiple reasons why RBM was perceived to be of necessity:

i. Inadequate performance management system
ii. Absence of an integrated monitoring and evaluation system
iii. Unclear roles and responsibilities among agencies

iv. Inadequate inter-agency coordination
v. Absence of a human resources plan
vi. Inadequate linkages between the budgetary process and the expenditure management process
vii. Lack of clarity in administrative rules and regulations that enhance an integrated performance in the public service

There were national and international drivers for RBM, Madhekeni (2012, p. 124) and Mavhiki (as cited in Dandira et al., 2020), added that the problems of increased resource shortages, the demand by the citizenry for qualitative and more responsive service delivery, political pressure, the demand for value for money by financiers, the demand by donors and development partners for accountability and results as well as the desire to adopt effective practices that were in line with globalization, increased the need for a RBM approach. According to the 1989 Public Service Review Commission, government ministries, including the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, lacked a results oriented performance management culture, with service delivery deteriorating in relation to quantity, quality and timeliness (Mundondo et al., 2019, p. 12). The short comings in service delivery required an intervention and this came in the form of the RBM.

The introduction of the RBM was therefore largely a "response to the national and stakeholders in the development process' demands for increased accountability, transparency and results (Meier, 2003, p. 2; Vamahaki et al., 2011, p. 12; Bester, 2012, p. 8). In service delivery, for example in schools, there was a need to have "something to show" and this could only be done through the presentation of tangible results (Madhekeni, 2012, p. 124). Armstrong (2009, p. 2), had earlier pointed out that RBM did offer some help in reducing opportunities for corruption and wastage, leading to the allotment and appropriate utilisation of resources which in turn will lead to better returns. RBM was therefore perceived as a panacea by all stakeholders in a

country which was then in a tight grip of corruption, nepotism and rampant wastage of resources (Madhekeni, 2012; Mundondo et al., 2019) as explained in the literature earlier.

Concern about the school curriculum also began to emerge and grow alongside the shift to RBM.

1.3.5 A New Curriculum in Education

The implementation of the RBM system led to improved performance results in the expanded education system but the resultant graduates had limited opportunities to contribute meaningfully in their communities either because of the meltdown in the economy or the irrelevance of their qualifications (Mundondo et al., 2019; Muzira & Bondai, 2020). Concerns about the relevance of the schools' curricula began to take centre stage in economic, industrial and social debates. From that perspective, Madhekeni (2012) and later Mpepereki (2019), revealed that the expansion of the education system during the 1980s led to many qualified graduates in the job market which had shrunk due to the poor economic situation constantly besieging the country. The resultant unemployment rate rose to staggering heights and the public started to raise questions about the school curriculum in need of refinement to align it with the needs of the country's industries. Mandeya (2015) and Maposa (2016) concur that because of the public's views that the education system was failing to produce employable graduates; there was a Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training. This was headed by one of the country's leading education experts, Nziramasanga and it became known as the Nziramasanga Commission. The Nziramasanga Commission (1998) recommended that the curriculum be reformed to focus on employment related skills amongst other skills. However, these recommendations were not taken up until recently due to government bureaucratic hurdles (Makaye, 2014; Mpepereki, 2019; Mundondo et al., 2019; Marovah et al., 2020).

1.3.6 The New Curriculum Rationale

As the relevance of the school curricula began to be debated at national platforms such as in

Parliament and Cabinet meetings, it was with due expectations that in 1998, as discussed in the background, His Excellency, the then President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Cde. R. Mugabe assigned a commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CIET) to look into the structure and content of education. According to the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (2015- 2022, p. i), "Following wide national consultations and study trips abroad, an invaluable report was produced in 1999. The recommendations spoke to the concerns, feelings and wishes of Zimbabweans with regards to what role they expected education to play in their family circumstances, community, nation and the global village." It was on the basis of these recommendations that a paradigm shift in the curriculum was necessitated. In his address to the Opening of the 8th Session of the Parliament of Zimbabwe of 2013, cited in the Curriculum Framework (2015-2022, p. ii), the then President drew the nation into this matter by stating the following, "….there is need to transform the structure and curriculum of the country's education system in order to adequately meet the evolving development aspirations. This should see greater focus being placed on the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, including… entrepreneurship."

Consequently, the Ministry of Education in 2014-2015 embarked on consultations with all stakeholders on their concerns, aspirations and views vis-à-vis the curriculum. These are the reflections underpinning the new curriculum. In addition to raising the academic performance of the learners, the new curriculum also emphasises the acquisition of science, mathematics, practical, technical and vocational skills as early as at pre-school. The Curriculum Framework (2015- 2022, p. 17-18) "clearly spells out the learner exit profiles at various levels in the education system and these exit profiles have been drawn from other high-performing education systems that have developed, refined and articulated generic skills and attributes that the learners need in the emerging socio-economic environment." The envisaged exit profiles implied herein are academic excellence, national identity, knowledge, skills and values,

attitudes and dispositions. In addition, the Curriculum Framework (2015-2022, p. 18) expands that the new curriculum takes into consideration the 'impact of information and communication technologies and their drive towards an information driven economy and how this warrant new skills sets to enable citizens to live and work competitively in a global village through:

a) Motivating learners to cherish their Zimbabwean identity, heritage value, history and cultural traditions.
b) Preparing learners for life and work in an indigenised economy and global world.
c) Ensuring learners acquire and demonstrate literacy and numeracy skills including practical competences necessary in life.
d) Preparing learners for voluntary service.
e) Fostering life-long continuous learning in line with emerging opportunities and challenges.

The new curriculum is therefore underpinned by notions of inclusivity, accessibility, equity, relevance, continuity, respect, gender sensitivity, transparency and accountability (Curriculum Framework, 2015-2022, p. 18).

1.3.7 New Curriculum Aims

With effect from 2017, the Ministry finally embarked on a gradual overhaul of the curriculum. This was in response to the recommendations made by the Nziramasanga Commission of Inquiry into Education (CIET) in 1998 and the Needs Analysis carried out by the government's adhoc committee in 2014. The new curriculum's goals are to raise performance levels and to produce learners who are conversant with the emerging national and global socio-economic trends in education, enterprise and technological advancement (Curriculum Development Unit, 2021). For example, according to the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (2015-2022, p. 6-7), the new curriculum aims to produce individuals who appreciate and respect the diversity of the Zimbabwean culture and religion, who can analyse and interpret global economic markets and who are able to engage in intellectual dialogue and exchange

using the various forms of technological media.

As can be deduced from the background discussion, the topic for this PhD research study on primary school teachers' efforts to raise performance is bench marked against the landscape of the introduction of RBM and the new curriculum in Zimbabwean schools. The RBM, according to Madhekeni (2012, p. 122) was mandated in 2005, hence it has been in place for a while before the introduction of the new curriculum in 2017. However, how the RBM has impacted on raising learners' performance in everyday teaching and learning situations has not been researched, hence this study. In essence, it can be argued that both the RBM and the new curriculum have acted as a motivation to schools and teachers to be more results oriented since both pronouncements are hinged on quality and results. The schools' need for recognition and placement at the top of the table of academic excellence and the extra pay for the individual teachers can be seen as motivation for schools and teachers to be at their best. The focus of this current research study was to thus establish the strategies that schools and teachers put in place to raise the performance of their learners in order to achieve success in meeting the targets and expectations of RBM and the new curriculum.

1.4 STUDY RATIONALE

This study has been formulated against the backdrop of results-based management and new curriculum demands at present in the Zimbabwean education sector. This cascades to the strategies that primary schools use to improve learners' performance as dictated by both the results-based management and new curriculum expectations.

In the course of practice as a primary school teacher in both government and private primary school settings, as a professional, I was intrigued by the emphasis on class pass rates, how fellow teachers were laboring to meet set targets and how the results based management approach had shifted set targets and changed the school culture. Personally, I struggled to come

up with effective strategies of improving my learners' performance and wondered how my colleagues in the school and surroundings coped. I also had challenges grappling with the demands of the results – based management approach as it exerted much pressure on me to continuously push my learners to excel. Furthermore, I had a vague idea of the purposes and objectives of RBM and its application in the school and in classrooms.

As I was pondering the RBM demands, a new curriculum was introduced in the education sector. In primary schools, Early Childhood Development (ECD), grade one and three classes were mandated to pioneer the new curriculum. As a senior teacher in primary school, I was allotted a grade three class to start the new curriculum. That put me in research mode; to find out more about the new curriculum, its goals, and content and implementation strategies. I become further intrigued as to how other teachers and schools were managing. Furthermore, when seeking research clearance from the ministry of education for this study, a detailed analysis brief of the new curriculum implementation was one of the conditions I was given.

My personal dilemma with meeting RBM demands and implementing effective strategies of improving my class performance had a domino effect on the need to find out more about the RBM system; its role and consequence in education and the strategies of improving learners' performances used by schools and teachers in my community. I became a de facto researcher on the RBM system in schools, on strategies of improving learners' performance and those of implementing a new curriculum. It is my belief that research information on the above stated phenomenon will benefit other teachers in my situation. The study findings will inform the education sector on the 'how to' with the given phenomena.

Contextually, the application of the RBM system in the education sector and the new curriculum implementation in a developing country like Zimbabwe struggling with economic reforms, poses a set of challenges and possibilities. Findings and

recommendations from this study do inform the Zimbabwean education community on how best to contextualize and implement adopted systems and changes related to RBM and a new curriculum. The literature and findings on learner performance improvement strategies will allow the education fraternity to adopt those strategies that are successful and adapt others for success.

1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to establish the measures that primary schools were undertaking to achieve good results (against the policy of results based management for all teachers and additionally a new curriculum introduced in grade 3).

1.5.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were:

1. To explore the specific strategies implemented by primary schools in Zimbabwe in response to the introduction of results based management for all teachers
2. To establish the outcomes of these efforts to improve academic performance in selected primary schools in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe.
3. To detail the lessons that can be learned from the three selected Zimbabwean primary schools for achieving good performance.

1.5.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the specific strategies used by the primary schools in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe in response to the introduction of results based management?
2. What were the outcomes of these efforts to improve learners' academic performance in selected primary schools in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe?
3. How did the three selected Zimbabwean primary schools achieve improved academic learner performance?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study provides data on results based management, learner performance improvement strategies and new curriculum implementation strategies in primary schools in Zimbabwe. It informs schools, teachers and education planners and policy makers on successful strategies to ensure improved learner performance in assessments, the alternatives and possibilities with regards to the RBM system and curriculum implementation strategies. The presentation of implementation strategies on the RBM system, learner improvement and the new curriculum affords stakeholders in education an opportunity to sieve, adopt and adapt strategies commensurate with the primary schools' means, needs and context. With regards to research, the study contributes knowledge to the gaps on the discussed phenomena of curriculum implementation and results based management and it could serve as a catalyst for further research on contextualising RBM and curriculum change implementation strategies in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe. Learner performance improvement strategies that respond to the present era of digital platforms and e-learning do create an interest for further research.

1.7 LOCATION OF STUDY

The study was undertaken in Zimbabwe, in the city of Kwekwe. The researcher selected three schools based on their results, schools A, B, C. School A had not achieved good results in five years from 2000- 2005 and did not feature in the list of academic achievements. However there has been vast improvements in recent years since the introduction of the RBM in 2005 and school A's results are now considered better than previously. School B has always posted good results and it has maintained them; it has continued to produce good results year after year. School C originally had good results but of late it has even surpassed its own expectations and achieved the best results in the district. The three schools provided the researcher with varied contexts and sources of data on how the three schools responded to the pressures of results

based management to achieve success. The researcher aimed to find out what strategies the schools and teachers had developed for obtaining such good results, what teaching methods they used, how they were implementing the new curriculum and other programmes that served to improve their results. The location was convenient for the researcher as it was part of her work environment and the individual schools were in close proximity although in different suburbs as illustrated in the map below:

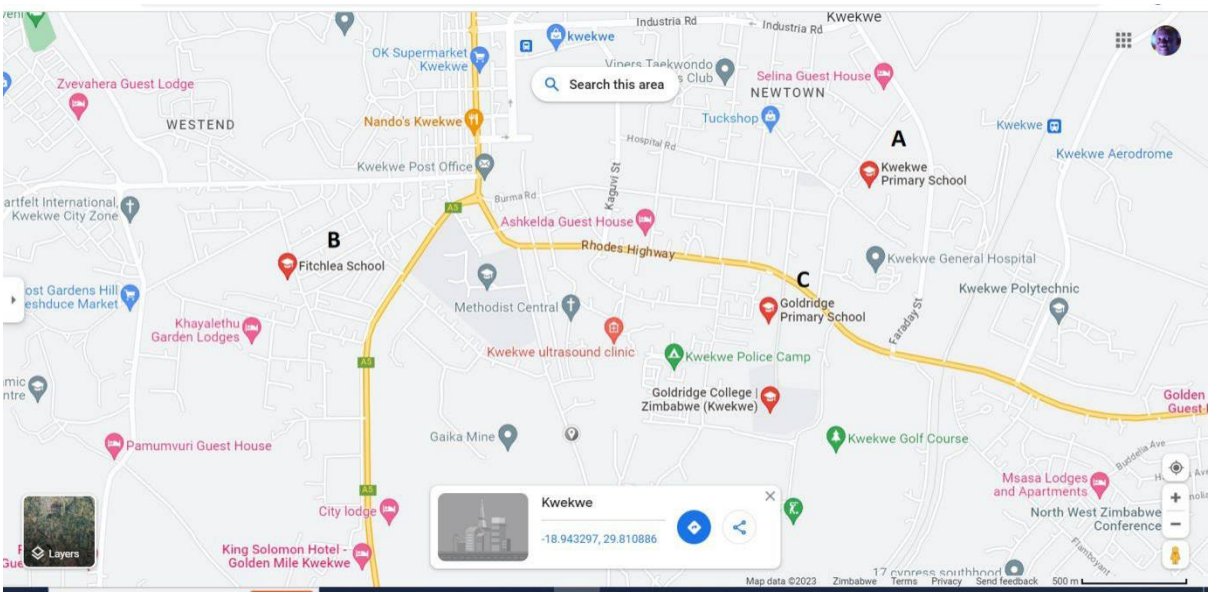

Figure 1.1: Map of Kwekwe showing study schools: A, B, C. Source: zimmaps 2023.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The main limitations of the study were conceptual, methodological and geographic. It was a small scale study undertaken with a sample of three schools in Kwekwe urban district and the findings can therefore not be extrapolated to other urban areas or the rest of Zimbabwe. Thus, I cannot generalize from the findings for other primary schools in the rest of Zimbabwe.

There was the likelihood at the onset that participants would grant the researcher very limited

time due to teachers' busy teaching schedules. It was envisaged that this could have had a bearing on the quality and quantity of data given. However, this did not become a challenging issue because I then chose to have the data gathered during the school holidays.

The study could also have been constrained by the available time at my disposal as my working hours as a teacher also consumed much time in the day and weekends, and this could have posed a problem in taking leave to visit schools. However, a decision was made such that the research was carried out during the holidays when school time tables were more relaxed which allowed me to generate adequate data for analysis. I expand on this later.

1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

CHAPTER ONE

This chapter presents the introduction and background, research questions, objectives and problem statement, the location of the study in Zimbabwe and the limitations of the study. The chapter also discusses the rationale of the RBM and the new curriculum, the study rationale and its significance.

CHAPTER TWO

This chapter discusses in detail the literature related to the key phenomena of the study such implementation strategies of both RBM and new curriculum. The discussion also includes the theoretical frameworks, curriculum change and change management theories which have relevance for the study. A discussion on how schools can improve learners' performance by drawing lessons from performance improvement theory is also included. An analysis on curriculum innovations, especially the factors on implementation, is also presented. A discussion of the strategies of achieving good results which have a bearing on instruction and teacher quality, academic and performance is also presented. A brief discussion of the psychological principles of teaching and learning are included to add value to the improvement of learners' performance and their academic achievement. Another brief discussion on the principles of teaching for life is also presented to give a holistic perspective on improving

learners' performance.

CHAPTER THREE

This chapter presents the research methodology, detailing the study's interpretivist and constructivist epistemological standpoints. The justification on why a qualitative case study was the research design of choice is also included, as well as the explanation on the use of semi-structured interviews, participant observations and document reviews as data generation instruments. The chapter also details the issues of data generation, presentation and content analysis. Questions of validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility are also addressed. Critical considerations of ethics including participants' confidentiality and participants' rights and consent are also detailed.

CHAPTER FOUR

This is the data presentation and analysis chapter which details participants' responses to the RBM and the new curriculum dictates. Checklists on the strategies employed by schools and teachers to improve learners' performance and achieve good academic results under both the RBM and new curriculum umbrella are given and discussed in detail. The chapter concludes by highlighting the main implementation strategies for RBM, learner improvement and the new curriculum.

CHAPTER FIVE

Chapter five presents a discussion of study findings, by linking them to key caveats in the literature, seminal and other scholars of note.

CHAPTER SIX

Chapter six details the theorisations which are derived from the various insights of the study in relation to the key phenomena and the critical questions. Thus, the study's contribution of new knowledge is presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Chapter seven presents some recommendations of the study regarding RBM and the

implementation of the new curriculum. Areas for future research are also detailed. The research conclusion, which includes a summary of the entire study, is also presented in this chapter.

1.10 Conclusion

This introductory chapter has highlighted the reasons why the research study was necessary. It has illuminated selected details on the background of the study which included the introduction of results based management system in schools and the implementation of a new curriculum within the context of Zimbabwean primary schools. The rationale for the introduction of the results based management system and new curriculum have also been explained. The critical questions that guided the study are also enumerated as well as the aims and objectives of the study. The introductory chapter has also given a synopsis of the thesis chapters.

The next chapter presents, in detail, a review of the literature related to the study, the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study, the strategies employed by the participating schools in an effort to raise performance and implement the new curriculum. A brief discussion on the psychological principles in teaching and on the guidelines for teaching for life success is presented to acknowledge the importance of holistic approaches in the teaching and learning process. This is because the essence of this study is centred on the teaching and learning processes in schools and classrooms.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to establish the learner performance improvement strategies in Zimbabwean primary schools in the context of results-based management and the introduction of a new curriculum, with a focus on the Kwekwe urban district. This chapter is therefore presented in two major parts. The first part presents a literature review on learner performance improvement strategies implemented globally and the theories underpinning learner improvement strategies. The second part discusses the theories that guide new curriculum implementation as well as the new curriculum implementation strategies in Zimbabwean primary schools as these have an influence on learner improvement and results.

2.2 Global trends in improving learners' performance

The scholarship on how schools and teachers refine their teaching approaches towards obtaining good results has led to discourses on teaching approaches and other strategies trialed by primary school teachers all over the world. Before a discussion on the approaches and strategies employed by schools and teachers to improve learners' performance and achieve good results, it is important to note that these approaches and strategies are heavily influenced and determined by the schools' organizational culture.

2.2.1 Schools' organizational culture

According to Brown (2004, p. 4 in Teasley, 2017), organizational culture "refers to a set of common values, attitudes, beliefs and norms, some of which are explicit and some of which are not." Smith and Beckham (2019) acknowledge that a school's organizational culture is the reason for its success or not in terms of achievement of goals. A school's organizational culture will therefore impact heavily on the strategies that particular schools select to achieve good results. Teasley (2017, p. 127) contends that organizational culture provides a sense of identity,

promotes an orientation towards achievement, helps shape standards and patterns of behavior and it creates distinct ways of doing things. Implied here is the notion that the school will employ achievement- oriented strategies that resonate with its identity and the manner of its operations. In that line of thinking, McKinsey (2007, p. 16 in Charturvedi et al., 2021), in a study of high-performing school systems, acknowledged that "the quality of a school system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers." The emphasis here is on the quality teaching delivered by quality teachers within the school's organizational culture. In agreement, Dennison (2019) argues that good teachers are the single most important factor that contributes to learners' achievement in the classroom, it is seemingly more important than other aspects in the school's organization. A good teacher is explained by Lynch as one who is qualified, experienced and has many methods of translating and interpreting theory into practice (Lynch, 2021).

2.2.2 The notion of quality in Teaching

According to the McKinsey report (2007, p. 31 in Chaturvedi et al., 2021) the only way to improve outcomes is to improve teaching, although there are other complexities. For schools to produce the best academic results, it means that there is quality teaching in place. It is asserted that quality teaching can only be delivered by quality teachers who are more thoughtful and effective in designing and delivering teaching that rouses student achievement (Porter, 2020). This constitutes part of this research, to explore the quality of teachers employed in schools, based on their qualifications, teaching methods and years of experience.

2.2.3 Teacher collegiality and professional development

The enhancement of quality teaching which capitalizes on performance improving strategies is aligned to quality teachers who gain their quality from interacting with their fellow colleagues and attending teacher improvement seminars for their professional development. Quality teachers are also about their commitment to their craft, upgrading their qualifications and doing research, having extra lessons trying out new innovative teaching methods in their classrooms

in order to cater for different learning styles and abilities (Priestly et al., 2015; Lightfoot et al., 2018; Fisher, 2021). In that respect, Dennison (2019) and Porter (2020) highlight that quality teachers understand that their fellow colleagues are their greatest resource, working together to master new strategies and refining their practice. Earlier, the United States Comprehensive School Demonstration Guide (2014) under its promising strategies for improving student achievement illuminated the value of sharing current researched strategies in professional development workshops and this has resonance for the current study. These are usually referred to as staff development sessions in schools, in which teachers and heads of schools share, support and train each other in innovative, effective research based methods and strategies with a proven record of success (Fitchett & Heafner, 2018; Muzira & Bondai, 2020). This researcher's goal was to find out if schools and teachers engaged in similar staff development sessions. This is of paramount importance in the primary schools' environment where one teacher teaches a plethora of subjects per grade. Herein the value of co-teaching, to use other subject specialists within the school, to develop staff in subject specific content and pedagogy is argued to be critical for development (Garira et al., 2019; Khun-Inkeeree et al., 2022).

2.2.4 Attributes of Quality Teaching

There are numerous attributes of quality teaching but the following two main attributes of quality teaching in the literature (Hattie, 2009; Schmoker, 2011; Fitchett & Hearfner, 2018) appear to consistently be: data (research)-informed teaching and the quality of teachers (years of teaching experience in the subject, qualifications, use of innovative, research-informed methodologies).

2.2.4.1 Data/research-informed teaching

One of the teaching approaches that have evidenced improved learning performance when implemented consistently is data/research-informed teaching. Data/research-informed is explained by the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) communique of April 2017 as a

robust set of ongoing practices or strategies that focus on assessing learners' learning and adjusting instruction to align to the learners' varying abilities and needs. According to Hattie (2012) and Fitchett and Hearfner (2018) improving academic performance or results relies in data/ research-informed teaching, a climate of high expectations and a learning environment that is collaborative and reflective. It is the result of effective use of learning time, utilising data/research to improve the teachers' quality in the classroom and the engagement of family or community partnerships in education (Fitchett & Hearfner, 2018). In brief, the authors call for a conducive and data informed teaching and learning environment (use of researched information and resources that enhance improved performance), with the setting of targets and high expectations while suggesting the involvement of parents, guardians and the community in the goals of raising academic performance. Thus, it is evident from the literature that improving the academic performance of learners leans on collective contributions and not only that of teachers.

2.2.4.2 Quality of teachers

The integral role of quality teachers in enhancing learners' performance can never be overemphasized in the discourse on teaching approaches & school strategies. In his scholarly work on meta-analysis, Hattie (2009, p. 36 in Dennison 2019) theorized 'signposts' in improving excellence in education which all form the lens of teachers as the unit of analysis. He claimed that teachers were amongst the most powerful influences in learning and as such they needed to:

1. Engage passionately in the art of teaching and learning by being aware of the learning needs and styles of the individual learners.

2. Have knowledge and understanding of their content.

3. Create meaningful learning experiences.

4. Relate lesson objectives to syllabus aims.

5. Provide meaningful and appropriate feedback so that each learner moves progressively through the curriculum levels.

These insights mean that teachers are the core in all aspects of improving academic performance, and as such, they should be adequately qualified and experienced to be able to deliver quality teaching which meets the needs of all learners despite learners' differing abilities. He also placed emphasis on providing a learning environment in which errors or failures are welcomed as learning opportunities and there is a belief that every learner has the potential to improve. The AIS Communique (2017) reiterates that quality teachers are an integral component in data-informed teaching as they are expected to plan using data from previous assessment, teach, assess, analyse, adjust and plan suitable research-informed interventions.

In addition, Fitchett and Hearfner (2018), concur with Schmoker (2011), pointing out that teacher quality has the greatest impact on student learning. This can be improved by providing more learning opportunities for teachers to have dialogue with each other, reflection and evaluation of their instructional practice. This provision, as pointed out earlier, can be done through school based staff development sessions in which teachers collaboratively educate each other on the latest trends in teaching methodologies and deliberate on how to solve learning problems which they encounter in their classes. Staff development sessions are effective in making classroom teaching into a collaborative effort.

2.2.5 The notion of High Expectations

Garira et al. (2019) assert that there is evidence that quality teachers consequently have high expectations of their learners implying that such teachers are on a trajectory of setting high academic goals for their learners to pursue. High expectations for both teachers and learners

sets the tone in the achievement of raising learners' performance. Lemov (2010) and Dennison (2019) argue that a climate of high expectations for all staff and learners is key to improving learner performance. Having high expectations for learners is evident in the assessments by noting the cognitive level of learning tasks or exercises that learners consistently engaging in or are given to work on. It is argued that when learners are assigned low cognitive level tasks or easy exercises, the unintentional message is one of low expectations (Hattie, 2012; Dennison, 2019). Therefore, in a scenario of high expectations, both teachers and learners do set high targets to be achieved and learners are given cognitively demanding class and homework exercises that assess all of the cognitive domains of thinking and knowledge (cognition domain), problem-solving skills (psychomotor domain) and positive attitudes towards learning (affective domain) Krathwohl et al. (2001 in Sousa, 2016).

Additionally, Resnick (2009 as cited in Rubie-Davies (2014) posits that the underpinning theory for having high expectations for all learners is grounded in one's theory of intelligence. If teachers believe that ability is effort based, then they are of a growth mind set. Mind sets influence how teachers teach and the expectations that they have for learners (Rubie-Davies, 2014; Sousa, 2016; Garira et al., 2019). Schools that are successful at helping all their learners to achieve, have a growth mind set. They believe effort creates ability and as a result hard work motivates learners to achieve good results (Danielson, 2012; Dennison, 2019; Khun-Inkeeree et al., 2022). Danielson (2012) and Hattie (2012) argue that having high expectations that all children can achieve helps learners to understand that intelligence is not a fixed trait but one that can be developed over time. This means that when learners realize that their efforts enable their ability, they are more motivated to learn and to improve.

i) Cognitive skills

Cognitive skills such as thinking, paying attention, reading and remembering are fundamental in the acquisition of knowledge and in improving learners' performance. That being the case, Resnick (as cited in Rubie-Davies, 2014) explains that there are several ways of teaching cognitive skills that have resulted in immediate gains in learners' performance. These include varied techniques to generate analogies, making logical deductions, creating and using memory aids and monitoring one's own state of knowledge (meta-cognition). Lemov (2010) and Hattie (2012) contend that as a result of these findings, cognitive researchers began to shift their attention to educational strategies that immerse learners in demanding, long-term intellectual environments. Rubie-Davies (2014) claims that positive results were coming in from learners who had been treated as if they were intelligent over an extended period of time, actually became intelligent. Recent studies on improved intelligence by Ritchie and Tucker-Drob (2018) indicate that an extra year of schooling raised the intelligence levels of learners, implying that robust and cognitive skills teaching is strategic in improving learners' performance. Schmoker (as cited in Ritchie and Tucker-Drob, 2018) observed that if learners are taught demanding content, are expected to explain and find connections, memorise and repeat- they learn more and they learn more quickly. This implies that as learners begin to think of themselves as smart learners, they are therefore able to recover quickly from their failures and they are able to correct themselves and grow intellectually, thus improving their performance.

Finally, Resnick (as cited in Rubie-Davies, 2014) further explains that people's beliefs about intelligence are not immutable, they respond to their context and settings. This means that it is possible to help learners to develop learning-oriented goals and an increased amount of intelligence thus setting them on the upward spiral by which they become smarter and achieve the kind of high level academic achievement expected of them (Rubie-Davies, 2014). To do

this, Resnick (as cited in Rubie-Davies 2014) recommends creating effort-based schools in which academic rigour and a thought -provoking curriculum spreads throughout the school system daily and for every learner, it seeks to grow their academic performance. In other words, to achieve improved academic performance, schools, teachers and learners need to set the bar high, believe in developing their intelligence and immerse themselves in the curricula and high cognitive level assessments that provoke thinking and problem- solving (Hattie, 2012; Sousa, 2016; AIS Communique, 2017).

2.2.6 Strategies to improve performance

Strategies to improve learners' performance are the hallmark of the entirety of this study. As such, DuFour (2010 as cited in Porter, 2020) suggests that as a starting point, schools should turn what they already know into what they do (action), that when teachers consistently focus on effective practices that they know work, significant improvement in student learning and their achievement can be realised. In pursuing learners' improved academic performance, certain conditions, such as the concept of feedback and feedforward, should be an integral part of any strategy which teachers and schools employ.

2.2.7 The Concept of Feedback and Feed Forward

Amongst a plethora of concepts, feedback and feedforward are concepts that feature prominently in raising learners' performance in classrooms. For that reason, Black (2013), Dennison (2019) and Porter (2020) posit that feedback is an integral part of dialogue between teacher and student and amongst learners themselves. Black (2013, p. 46) cites three essential elements of enhanced feedback as:

1. Clarity of learning goals for the student.
2. Evidence about the prior learning and current understanding of the student.
3. Understanding how to close the gap between the prior learning and current understanding.

Black (2013) explains that feedback gives the student a road map for how to get from his or her current level of performance to the desired learning goal. What this means is that learners need to know from their teachers how they are faring in their mastery of the intended skills and acquisition of knowledge. This knowledge is gained from the assessments undertaken and marked: scripts and exercises with informative remarks from the teacher which assist to improve learners' understanding of where they went wrong and how to improve in the future.

It is argued that learners need to have their work marked and be given feedback quickly so that they can do the corrections or additions in an effort to master the required skills and widen their knowledge. Danielson (2012), Dennison (2019) and Porter (2020) concur that academic feedback is more strongly and consistently related to achievement than any other teacher behaviour. This relationship is consistent regardless of grade, socioeconomic status, race or school setting (Porter, 2020). It is argued that when feedback and corrective procedures are used, most learners can attain the same level of achievement as the top 20% of the learners in a class (Dennison, 2019). What all this signals is that teachers need to mark consistently and give feedback soon as this motivates learners and it boosts their confidence to achieve a better result, regardless of who they are and, where they come from academically.

Feed forward is also important in achieving improved academic targets as this concept emphasizes anticipation of hurdles/problem areas and putting contingent plans of intervention in place. Maitra (2021) views feedforward as timely and constructive feedback that feeds into the next assignment. This perception implies giving feedback at the onset of a task and giving clues on how best to move forward with fewer errors. For example, the teacher may mark the first steps of a given task and point out errors therein and suggest a better way forward that avoids anticipated errors. In another scenario, the teacher may also sample a few lines of story writing and give ideas on how best to continue the narrative by adding certain dimensions to boost creativity and enhance the learner's talent in story writing. Feedforward is future oriented

by definition and Sadler et al. (2022) posit that feedforward focuses on learner development in the future whereby errors are quickly rectified before they spread across the task or whereby a good trait is noticed and the learner offered constructive guidance on to expand the possibilities. In effect, a combination of both feedback and feedforward ensures that assessment has a developmental impact on learning and in improving learner performance (Gonzalez, 2018).

Thus, the literature consulted on academic performance improvement can be summarised into the following five principles which are repeatedly flagged for their significance in boosting learners' performance:

1. Teachers are instrumental; they need to be knowledgeable, versatile in their teaching methods, set high targets for all learners, and treat all learners as equally capable and intelligent.
2. Setting of high expectations for everyone involved is important: teachers and learners need to work hard to meet the high expectations.
3. Intelligence is not innate but it can be developed through consistent effort and hard work. Anyone is capable of achieving good results if they are made to believe they can grow intellectually and improve academically.
4. Feedback and feedforward are crucial elements in improving academic performance and it must be given timeously.
5. Parental and community involvement with teachers in setting goals and fulfilling work plans is also important for improved learner performance.

2.2.8 Ways of Enhancing Academic improvement: Tapping into Grey literature

There appears to be a significant body of grey literature on improving learners' performance and it is necessary not to ignore it for the value it has in this current study. In pursuance of improving learners' academic achievement, Scott (2017), basing his assertions on his own experiences at university, discovered that while aspects of a learner's academic performance

are unique to their learning styles and natural aptitudes, there are some key strategies which can be applied to accelerate performance. The strategies to improving academic performance are (Scott, 2017 blog post, Chaturvedi et al., 2021) inclusive of setting of goals and working backwards. Working backwards means identifying the end targets or desired results first then developing assessments and lesson plans that match the targets, that is, starting with the final solution and working backwards to the beginning (Dearborn & Pennington, 2022). Goals enable learners to continuously track their progress and make adjustments accordingly. Scott also placed emphasis on practicing and mastering examination skills by revising past examination papers and writing them under the stipulated exam conditions. According to Scott (2017) and George (2020), learners practicing with many past examination papers under examination conditions have the following benefits:

1. Recognising patterns in the questioning techniques and content

2. Applying knowledge to different types of questioning becomes easier

3. Using additional resources supplied with the examination papers becomes familiar

4. The structure of the examinations makes more sense

5. Learners become faster and less prone to making silly mistakes.

In the next section, teaching strategies are discussed and the literature reveals that they are most effective when strategies are used in combination with each other rather than when they are used in isolation (one strategy per lesson).

2.2.9 The Differentiated Instruction Approach

Learners have different learning abilities and as such teaching approaches that appeal to the different learning abilities are fundamental in improving overall learners' performance. Tomlinson (2011) and Shareefa et al. (2019) recommend the Differentiated Instruction Approach in improving results in schools. Differentiated Instruction is an approach to teaching

learners with different abilities in the same classroom (Hall as cited in Shareefa et al., 2019). According to Ismajli and Imani-Morina (2018), the theory behind differentiated instruction is that teachers should vary and adapt their teaching to accommodate the vast diversity of learners in the classroom. Teachers who differentiate instruction recognise that learners differ in many ways, including prior knowledge and experience, readiness, abilities and learning styles among other things (Tomlison, 2011; McCarthy, 2023). Teachers are therefore encouraged to adapt their instructional methodologies to include every learner in the classroom so that by the end of a given period, all learners reach and achieve the same objectives (Ismajli and Imani- Morina, 2018). With differentiated instruction, learners can explore a topic or concept through a teaching strategy and activities that best meets their learning style while examining the values, beliefs and ideas that shape their experiences (Shareefa et al., 2019; McCarthy, 2023). In this research; to achieve good results, it became necessary to establish whether Kwekwe urban schools used a differentiated approach in improving their learners' academic results, that is, did they cater for individual learner differences in their teaching.

2.3.1 The Remedial Intervention Strategy

Learners with varying learning abilities are in all classrooms and they need to be catered for through teaching strategies or interventions that suit their abilities. The Handbook on Remedial Teaching (2013) regards the ultimate aim of remedial teaching as helping pupils who have not achieved the requisite outcomes. In a classroom of mixed abilities, it is inevitable that some learners will fall behind because of their abilities, experiences and possible learning difficulties in specific learning areas. It is argued that effective teachers should have a repertoire or inventory of research based instructional strategies to help such learners (Shareefa et al., 2019). Remedial theory emphasizes teaching to retain knowledge for later retrieval and application (Lo, 2012; McCarthy, 2023). The periodic revisits and breakdown of matter into smaller units are the hallmarks of re instruction (Ismajli and Imani-Morina, 2018). Inevitably teaching for

good results implies resorting to more remedial instruction for greater knowledge. Ismajli and Morena (2018) posit that the essence of learning should always be the point of departure and the pedagogical design (instructional method) should be the catalyst in achieving that learning. Therefore, remedial instruction can be used as an instructional design, that is, the same concept or lesson retaught in different ways but with the same objectives – to improve results. This research aimed to find out how teaching methods played a part in improving learner performance.

2.3.2 The Holiday/Summer School Strategy

Similar to remediation, there has been a growing trend in primary schools of holiday lessons or extra lessons after the normal specified academic timetable. This trend is practiced worldwide. In one of their strategies for improving results, The Centre for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement in the United States of America (2014) lists summer schooling and extra tuition as part of the interventions. In the same line, the role of parents and guardians as teachers' assistants is also flagged as critical as learners take homework and they need to be assisted at home. Schooling et al. (2010) and McDowell (2023) point out that in instructional foundation's principles associated with student centred learning, parents and the community have direct access to the teachers and the knowledge base, playing an integral role in the schooling process. This is particularly valid for primary school education, where parents and guardians are aware of the syllabus content, the expectations of the teachers and are in consultation with teachers on how best to assist learners to achieve improved performance. This research therefore aimed to establish (from schools and teachers) if holiday schooling, extra lessons and homework were on their strategy list to achieve good results and how it enfolded in their schooling context.

2.3.3 The Variation-Metacognitive Approach

In studying the kind of teaching that resulted in good results, Mun Ling Lo (2012) used the

variation theory in improving teaching and learning. Variation theory means teachers use the metacognitive approach to instruction in which learners take control of their own learning by defining goals and monitoring their own progress in achieving them (Samuelsson & Pramling, 2016, p. 47; Boryga, 2023). In other words, from the onset learners are made aware of what is at stake (achievement of good results) and the teachers draw out and work with the existing understanding that their learners bring with them. In variation theory, learners are given the latitude to explore and invent their own codes or mnemonics of understanding facts and ideas in the context of a given conceptual framework (Isak & Posch, 2013; Boryga, 2023). Teachers teach subject matter in depth, providing many examples in which the same concept is used to give a firm foundation of knowledge. According to Samuelsson and Pramling (2016) and Boryga (2023), teaching focuses on helping learners distinguish between what constitutes correct and incorrect solutions or answers thereby developing their analytical problem-solving skills and deepening their understanding of concepts (metacognition). When learners reach a stage in which they can correct incorrect concepts, then learning has taken place and good results can be obtained. This research set out to establish from teachers if they used variation theory with metacognition as one of their strategies in improving pass grades in their classrooms.

2.3.4 The Use of Assessment

The value of assessments in the literature for improved learner performance is evident. Tomlinson (2011), Hattie (2012), Black & William (2012) and Khun-Inkeeree et al. (2022) have identified assessments as one of the principles of an instructional foundation that contributes to the attainment of good results. Lynch (2020) asserts that assessment should be on-going and tightly linked to teaching as teachers constantly gather information on how the learners are performing at a given point in order to plan their intervention. This means testing at every point after concept completion and remediating. Kizlik (2012) and Black & William (2012) contend

that all tests are a form of formative or summative assessment and Fisher (2021) adds that assessments are part of an educational system. Teachers assess to determine whether an objective or goal has been achieved (Fisher, 2021). As can be deduced, assessment is an integral part of strategic teaching. In the current study, I aimed to explore the types of assessments employed by teachers as part of the preparations for producing better learner results.

2.3.5 A Synopsis on Learner Improvement Strategies

The entire focus of the current research is on the attainment of improved learners' performance evidenced by good academic results. The literature has revealed that quality strategic teaching is at the core of achieving good academic results. Quality teaching translates into qualified, knowledgeable and experienced teachers who are able to deliver strategic teaching drawing from their vast array of teaching methods. Quality teachers are usually employed at effective schools or improving schools in an educationally enlightened community that is able to support the schools and teachers in their efforts to produce the best results. This conceptual framework can best be explained in the diagrammatic representation below. The diagram gives a summative ideal of a scenario where improved learners' performances are the main focus for all stakeholders. As has been discussed, researchers have revealed strategic and effective methods and ideas on how to achieve and improve academic results. Good performance in public schools have been demanded and are expected by government. The diagram is the result of the scholarship consulted on improving learner performance in schools and it was valuable as the theoretical foundation of improving learners' performance. This figure (2.1) contributes a framework distilling from the current wide body of knowledge to better understand some of the elements required to improve learners' performance.

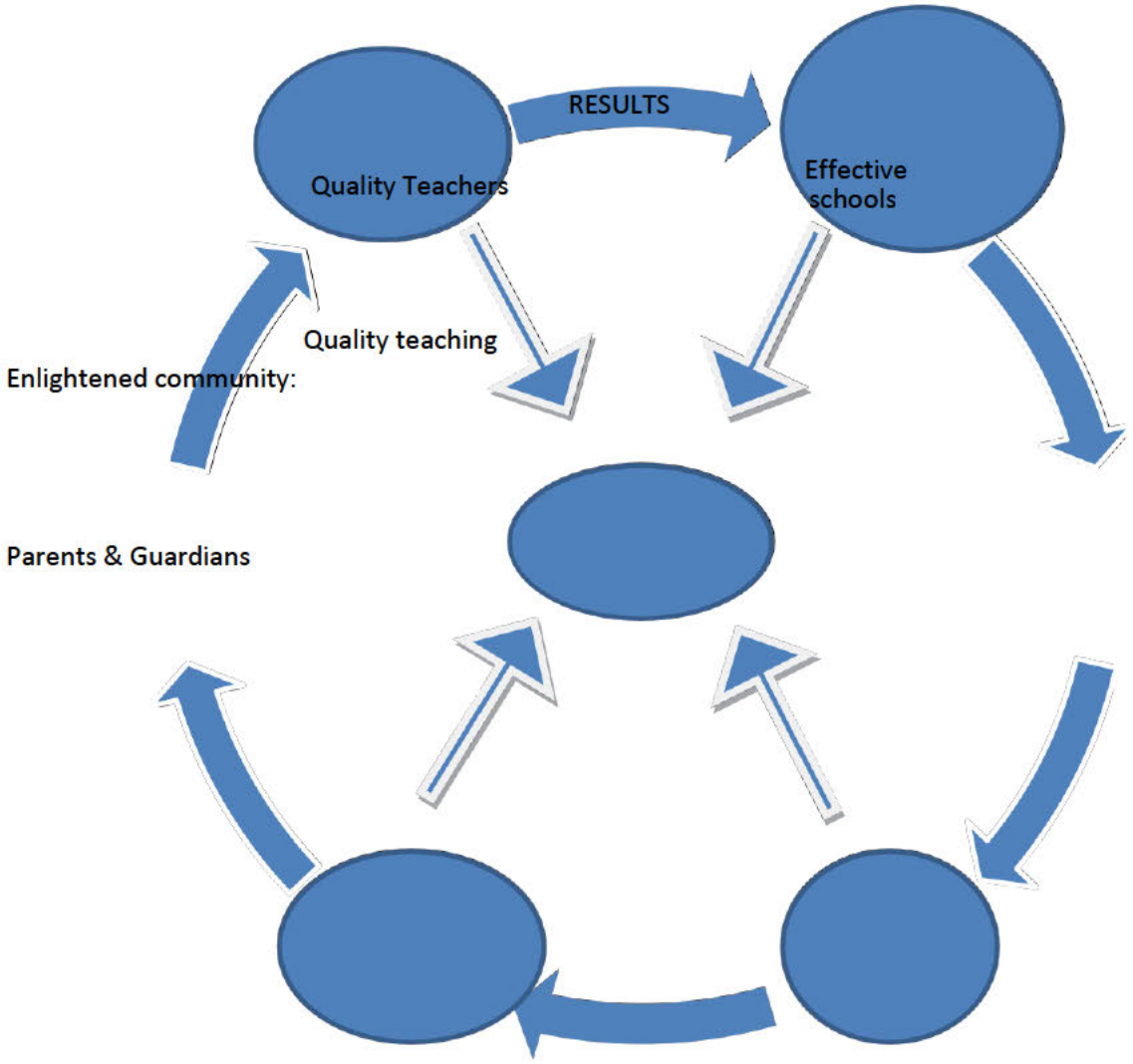

Figure 2.1. Selected elements to improve learner performance (derived from literature review)

2.3.6 The Zimbabwean Case

What had been unfolding in Zimbabwean schools and the rationale for effecting Results-Based Management (RBM) in the education sector has been discussed in detail in chapter one. In addition, the introduction and incorporation of the RBM and the new curriculum in schools compelled and motivated schools and teachers to seek and implement methods and strategies of achieving high performance in the pursuit of academic excellence (Mundondo et al. 2019; Marovah et al., 2020). Many studies were carried out on the implications of implementing the RBM systems for the public sector in Zimbabwe. For instance, Madhekeni (2012) in his findings communicated the advantages and disadvantages of implementing RBM in public institutions as opposed to its use in the private sector. Similarly, Pazvakavambwa (2015) examined developing and sustaining a RBM model for Zimbabwean schools. His findings highlighted the shortcomings and concerns of implementing the current Results Based Management (RBM) and recommended a home grown, education sensitive model instead. Gutuza (2016) investigated the challenges faced by schools in implementing RBM in Zimbabwe. His main finding was that heads of schools and teachers, the key stakeholders in the education system, were not involved in the policy formulation of RBM and hence lacked expertise to implement this management system in their schools. Mundondo et al., (2019) debated the possibilities and challenges of implementing the RBM system in the public sector in Zimbabwe. Their main finding was that civil servants in the lower levels of ministries and departments had not clearly understood and embraced the RBM system as evidenced by their lack of necessary competences, knowledge and technical skills to effectively implement the RBM system. All the four studies cited, although with a bias towards the public sector and schools in particular, draw attention to the RBM system as a management system and not to the strategies implemented by schools to achieve the set targets. This study has taken a step further by seeking to establish how the RBM system has influenced the strategies to raise learners' performance by teachers and primary schools in Kwekwe urban district in Zimbabwe.

In this light, the first part of the theoretical framework discusses the relevant motivation and performance improvement theories that underpinned schools and teachers' actions to produce the expected good results. The chosen theories illuminate how motivated groups or individuals behave in meeting set targets especially in the business community, since RBM is an industry-based concept, which has cascaded into public organisations like schools.

2.3.7 Theoretical Frameworks

This study explores primary school teachers' efforts to raise learners' performance against a backdrop of results based management (and for grade 3 teachers, the new curriculum implementation as well). The underpinning theories that inform these efforts are those of expectancy motivation and curriculum change management. Expectancy Motivation theory provides the lens through which the actions and behaviour of teachers could be understood as they made efforts to raise learners' performance in their schools and classrooms. Curriculum change management theory also provides a periscopic lens through which the grade 3 teachers' actions and behaviours in implementing the new curriculum can be understood and analysed.

2.3.7.1 Motivation Theories

Motivation is defined by the McMillan's English Dictionary (2007, p. 975) as "a feeling of an enthusiasm or interest that makes you determined to do something," and being motivated is defined as "enthusiastic and determined to achieve success," and this equals being driven. Stimpson and Farquharson (2010, p. 163) define motivation as the internal and external factors that stimulate people to take actions that lead to achieving a goal. Motivation is, therefore, the driving force behind human behaviour and action (Gordon, 2020). Individuals are driven to do things successfully or to reach certain goals because they have been motivated to do so. The RBM system can therefore be perceived as a motivator to schools and teachers to produce good results with the rewards of incentives and recognition, a placement in the upper echelons of the best schools' table and the rewarding of individual teachers.

2.3.7.2 Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Amongst a host of motivation theories, Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), in addition to the follow-up work by Isaac, Zerbe and Pitt (2001) and Stimpson and Farquharson (2010) was chosen as underpinning schools and teachers' actions towards achieving good results as it resonated with the purposes of the research, for instance why teachers are aiming at raising their learners' performance. According to Stimpson and Farquharson (2010, p. 163) "Expectancy Motivation Theory falls under process theories whose main emphasis is on how and why people choose certain behaviours in order to meet their personal goals".

Expectancy theory relies only on extrinsic motivators to explain causes of behaviours exhibited in the workplace, the external rewards are viewed as inducing motivational states that fuel behaviour" (Isaac et al., p. 215 in Stimpson and Farquharson, 2010). What schools and teachers do to achieve good academic results is therefore propelled and guided by the external rewards proffered by the RBM. What these actions were exactly, was the thrust of the research. Vroom suggested that individuals choose behaviours in ways that they believe will lead to outcomes that they value. Quick (2003, p. 30 in Stimpson and Farquharson, 2010) expands this notion by noting that expectancy theory explains human behaviour as "a function of two factors, the perceived value of the reward that certain behaviours yield and the expectation in the doer that certain behaviour actually will yield that reward." In a school setting, expectancy theory translates into schools and teachers putting in place particular actions, strategies or methods and programmes in their teaching & learning programme that will yield the desired good results which in turn have individual teacher and school benefits.

Stimpson and Farquharson (2010, p. 163) highlight that Vroom's expectancy theory also hinges on three beliefs or factors:

1. Valence – the depth of the want of an extrinsic reward such as money or an intrinsic reward such as satisfaction. As highlighted earlier, schools and teachers rank themselves on

achievement results and besides the monetary reward, that recognition and acknowledgement that school X and teacher so and so were among the best in the annual accreditation is more than enough to prompt rigorous effort and action.

2. Expectancy – the degree to which people believe that putting effort into work will lead to a given level of performance. Implied here is the view that schools and teachers will make an effort to put in place methods and programmes that will yield good results.

3. Instrumentality – the confidence of employees that they will actually get what they desire and what has been promised. Every year Grade 7 or end of primary school results are announced publicly and schools ranked accordingly. Best schools and their respective high performing teachers are invited to a rewards ceremony. That is instrumentality, for schools and teachers to know that their efforts and hard work will yield the desired good results and an acknowledgement of their efforts.

Isaac et al (2001, p. 216 in Stimpson and Farquharson, 2010) explained the expectancy theory as VIE theory where the letters stand for Valence, Instrumentality and Expectancy. Therefore, the motivational state of an individual performing a particular task is dependent on the linkage of these three factors. The authors further explain this linkage diagrammatically which is presentedoverleaf:

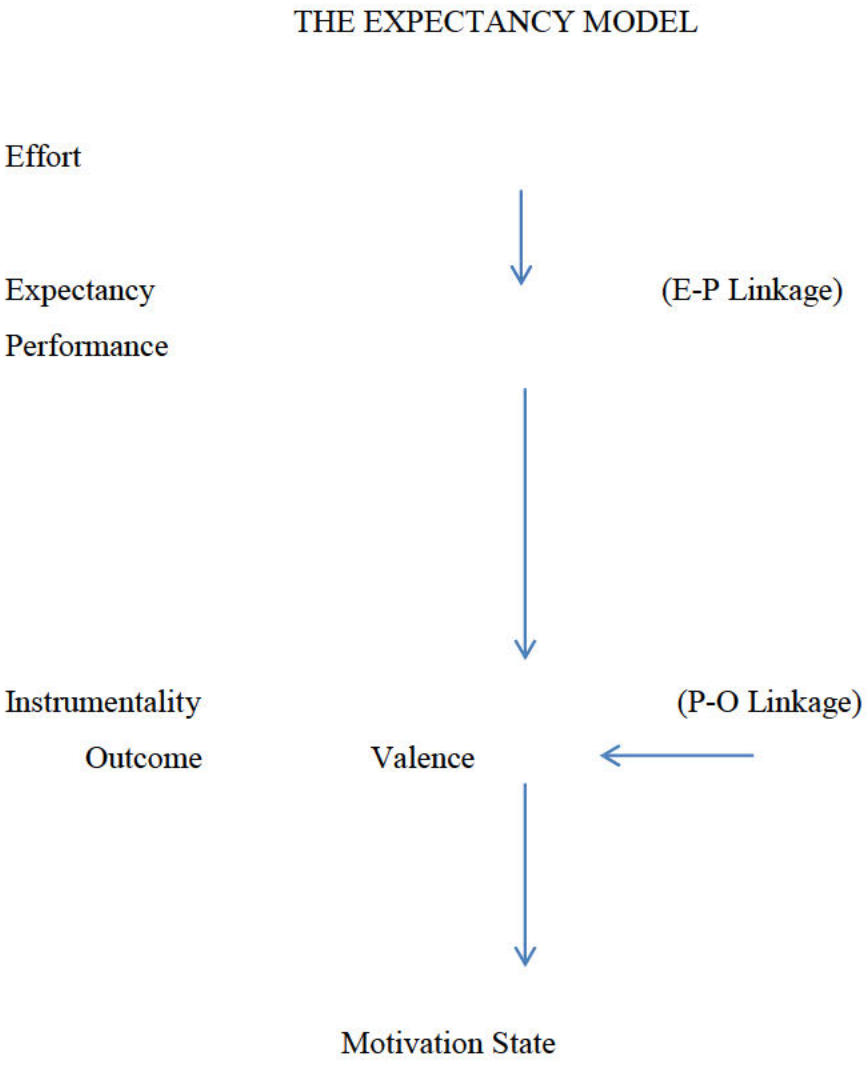

Figure 2.2: The Expectancy Model

Vroom reasoned that as long as employees or workers believed that an increase in work effort will lead to improved performance and that this performance will lead to valued rewards, then they are motivated to achieve the goals at hand (Stimpson & Farquharson, 2010). The schools and teachers in this case will put particular effort and hard work into their teaching methodologies and teaching plan with the belief that this will improve their learners' performance leading to good academic results which, in turn, will place the school at the top of the academic table and the teachers will be accordingly rewarded with material and professionalbenefits.

2.3.7.3 Expectancy motivation framework

As schools and teachers make efforts to raise learners' performance, they employ performance improving strategies that are driven by the teachers' motivation to succeed. Improved learners' performance is in itself a motivator to teachers to keep trying harder and finding more effective strategies to raise learners' performance to even higher percentages. According to Nickerson (2021), Vroom realised that a person's performance is based on factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities. He also emphasised that effort, performance and motivation are linked in an individual's motivation. Vroom used the variables of expectancy, instrumentality and valence to crystalise all this. Vroom's variables have been used to underpin the understanding and analysis of the teachers' actions, perceptions and behaviours in raising learners' performance under the push of the results based management system. As this researcher sought clarity on why and how teachers made efforts to raise learners' performance, Vroom's expectancy, instrumentality and valence variables came into effect in understanding their motivation, personalities, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities. These variables also shaped and informed the analysis of their responses, responses which were influenced by their motivation, personalities, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities. Each variable played out as follows:

Expectancy

According to Kukulowicz (2022), expectancy is the belief that increased effort will lead to increased performance. In this case, teachers believe that the more performance improving strategies they use, the more learners will also raise the results bar. A combination of RBM expectations and the expectancy variable act as motivators or drives to push the teachers to increase their efforts. However, these efforts are affected by the availability of relevant resources like textbooks, internet connectivity and gadgets and even time, having the requisite skills to implement the strategy like digital aptitude in online learning and having the necessary

support to implement the strategy like guardians and parental support on projects and homework. In as much as teachers might be driven or motivated by expectancy, the listed factors might militate against their efforts.

Instrumentality

Instrumentality is explained by Nickerson (2021) as the belief that good performance translate into receiving a valued outcome. The guiding principle is that when a person believes that a good performance yields rewards, they outdo themselves. Teachers in this case make an effort to use strategies that have a success rate in improving learners' performance in the belief that they will be rewarded for the improved learners' performance. The RBM proffers rewards for improved learners' performance; hence teachers put effort expecting to be rewarded in remuneration, recognition, recommendation or even promotion. Instrumentality is underpinned by the understanding of the relationship between performance and rewards, trust and transparency on the process that decides who gets rewarded (Gordon, 2022). The RBM spells out that clearly in this case. The only mitigating factor might be the quality or worthiness of the reward.

Valence

Gordon (2022) explains valence as the importance individuals place on the outcome. For instance how much do teachers value the improved performance of their learners to their profession, what it means to them to have a class that excels in examinations because of the effort they put? When teachers hold in esteem the improved performance of their learners, the valence becomes positive, that it is not only about rewards but also the satisfaction of success.

Complementing the expectancy variables, I have also leaned on Herzberg's two-factor theory on motivation to aid the analysis of the teachers' driving forces in raising learners' performances.

2.3.7.4 Herzberg's Motivation Theory

In support, Herzberg's factor theory of motivators (1959 cited Marcouse, Surridge & Gillespie, 2011, p. 241), state that positive motivators such as achievement, recognition of achievement, the work itself, responsibility and advancement make workers go the extra mile in achieving the expected goals.

According to the two- factor theory of Herzberg, people are influenced by two factors with regards to their work performance and these are what Herzberg termed 'hygiene' and 'motivator' factors. Hygiene factors are those that need to be addressed by a company or school or ministry to make sure the employees or teachers are not dissatisfied by their work experiences. These factors are "wages, salaries and other financial remunerations, working conditions, job security, quality of supervision and interpersonal relations and company policies and administration" (Marcourse et al., 2011, p. 241). As much as the hygiene factors do not necessarily lead to high levels of motivation, they are deemed as a baseline to employee satisfaction. It is asserted that a satisfied employee becomes easier to motivate than a dissatisfied one.

The motivating factors are those factors that spur an individual to achieve higher performance at work and to develop his or her personal growth. Effective motivator factors do not only lead to job satisfaction but also to better work performance and feelings of achievement or self-actualisation. Motivator factors are listed by Marcourse et al. (2011, p. 241) as "challenging and stimulating work, opportunity for advancement, sense of personal growth, recognition of job achieved, status and responsibility." Herzberg argued that the presence of these motivator factors would definitely motivate employees into unprecedented levels of work achievement. The implication for a school setting is that the school and teachers would strive to put in place strategies that will assure improved learner performance and raise the school's pass rate.

An analysis of Herzberg's two factor theory shows that when both hygiene and motivator factors are present in a working environment, employees would go the extra milein achieving and responding to the policies and expectations of the company or ministry in the case of public schools. However, critics of the two- factor motivation theory have highlighted that the theory puts too much emphasis on employee satisfaction and motivation at the expense of diminishing returns in productivity. Swanson (2009 cited in Magwa and Magwa, 2015) noted that numerous studies demonstrated that employee satisfaction could increase while actual production decreased or remained the same. In schools, this would mean that even when conditions of service and salaries were satisfactory, teachers would still put lackluster effort in teaching and produce mediocre outcomes. This criticism does not have much bearing in this study because the aim of the study was to shed light on the strategies used by teachers in an effort to satisfy RBM and the new curriculum demands and expectations.

2.3.7.5 The two-factor framework

In complementing the expectancy motivation framework, Kukulowicz (2022) posits that Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene theory is very important in understanding the motivation that drives employees to contribute to the achievement of an organisation's objectives. Linking this position to the study, Herzberg's two factor theory illuminates teachers' motivation to implement strategies that raise the academic performance of their learners. Nickerson (2021, p. 79) summarises Herzberg's theory into:

- ***Motivator Factors*** which include challenging and meaningful work, increased responsibility, achievement, opportunities for growth and the job itself. These factors denote job satisfaction. The analysis in this study therefore sought to establish how teachers are motivated by both the RBM and the new curriculum in crafting implementation strategies that led to improved academic performance by learners and teachersatisfaction.

- ***Hygiene Factors*** which can cause job dissatisfaction because of salary, working conditions, job security, policy and interpersonal relationship discrepancies. In analysing teachers' behaviours, actions and responses, these factors reflected how much teachers are demotivated by the listed issues in implementing effective strategies in their classrooms.

2.4 RBM Motivation and Lived Experiences

In as much as the RBM motivates employees, government ministries and organisations to perfect their skills to produce tangible and credible results, there is contesting evidence on RBM that reflects challenges with it. Pazvakavambwa (2015) noted that there was a limited use of RBM in schools because the heads of schools and teachers had a negative perception towards it owing to the top-down approach used when it was first introduced; this was among other reasons such as the economic impact and applicability. Gutuza (2016) established that RBM was not effectively implemented in schools because teachers as the key stakeholders in the education system were not involved during policy formulation of RBM. Furthermore, heads of schools lacked the experience and expertise to guide teachers in this management system. Even in other government ministries, evidence on shop floor levels is not convincing (Maposa, 2015). Recent studies by Mundondo et al. (2019, p. 1) point to similar concerns that the civil servants have scant knowledge and application skills to implement RBM into their work plans.

Even in the private sector, the evidence on the ground is not encouraging. Vahamaki (2018, p. 19) reviewing and analyzing progress in RBM in development co-operations, noted numerous challenges: of a lack of guidance or understanding within organisations of what RBM is and its purpose, structural and systems issues, capacity constraints and the cost of RBM, a lack of a results culture and ownership and harmonization. These were some of the impediments which worked against successfully implementing RBM. Madhekeni (2012, p. 13) argued that despite claims of widespread appreciation and buy-in from all parties across government at all levels,

evidence from surveys with a majority of shop floor workers revealed their ignorance of the RBM except for reciting the abbreviations and perceiving it as someone else's task.

Maposa (2015) studied the impact of RBM on service delivery in Gweru Public Works and the findings were that although the RBM was used to enhance service delivery, heads of department and employees did not understand it because of a lack of training and knowledge, ignorance of the RBM systems or any other management systems either. Matambatuwisi et al. (2016) contend that although RBM was effective in improving performance on customer care, meeting set targets and in producing quality products in small and medium scale enterprises, there were insurmountable challenges hampering the effective implementation. The challenges bedevilling the effective implementation of the RBM seem to stem from minimum knowledge of it prior to implementation, leading to negative attitudes by the role players, a lack of adequate financial resources for training and incentivizing implementers and a lack of communication between the policy makers and the implementers (Madhekeni, 2012; Pazvakavambwa, 2015; Maposa, 2015; Gutuza, 2016; Mutambatuwisi et al., 2016; Vahamaki, 2018; Mundondo et al., 2019).

2.4.1 RBM Implementation Challenges

RBM has been promoted as an effective measure of ensuring quality service delivery and improved academic performance results in developed countries (Rappassan, 2010). However, in developing countries, the lived experiences in Zimbabwean situations are contradictory. Amjad (2008, p. 2), lamented that the RBM was imported from developed countries "by consultants keen to show case its potentials instead of dove tailing it to the needs of the receiving country." Pazvakavambwa (2015) confirmed that Zimbabwe imported the integrated RBM model that was said to have been successful in Malaysia. Mayne (2007, p. 87 in Mundondo et al., 2019), argued that "prior to prescribing RBM implementation, it should be borne in mind that every country is peculiar, has its own objectives and challenges." This

clearly shows that an effective and sustainable RBM model in one country can be inapplicable and unsuitable in another. Mavhiki et al. (2013 in Dandira et al., 2020), posited that since the ideologies and objectives differed from one country to another, this should also translate to the RBM model being adopted. Also, the model should be revised accordingly, taking into cognisance that the nature of the teaching profession in primary schools is an exchange from one teacher to the other per grade from ECD to Grade Seven. It then becomes an unfair meritocracy measure of individual teachers when it should be used to measure the merits of the school as an organization.

Also, Pazvakavambwa and Steyn (2014), observed the main challenges in implementing RBM revolved around the change in focus from output to outcomes, the fundamental changes required on how organisations are managed, how the public sector and non-profit organisations like schools go about delivering programmes and services and in mental reorientation (shifting mind-sets) and behavioural changes(paradigm shifts) on all aspects of management, from operational to personnel assessments to strategic planning and budgeting. All this sums up to performance information which is required; that elusive cultural change whereby performance information becomes valued as being essential to good management (Madhekeni, 2012; Dandira et al., 2020). Furthermore, Mandeya (2016) commented that integrating performance information into managing and budgeting was a journey, not a destination as it took time and perseverance while key personnel moved on, government structures changed, and priorities shifted and relearning had to happen. In short, integrating performance information needed more time, taking into consideration that the management system and personnel periodically changed. It is costly as well in terms of time and money that an already overwhelmed public sector or non-profit organisations like schools do not have at their disposal (Dandira et al., 2020). The thrust of this study is the influence of RBM in motivating schools and teachers to engage in strategies that improve academic results because RBM is enforced in schools despite

its implementation flaws.

On a different note, adding to the performance measurement discourse, Schoeberger (2018) analysed the effects of individual teachers on learners' grades and standardised test scores and revealed data that suggests that non-cognitive attributes such as resilience and self-discipline were far more important in determining the long-term academic success of learners. The analysis here clearly indicates that teaching strategies should not be centrered on an academic focus, that is, results-oriented only but it should include vital life attributes which learners have that cannot be assessed or developed using standardised tests.

2.4.2 The RBM Model Adopted in Zimbabwe

A number of RBM models are available for government ministries to study and select from for their individual country contexts. However, this was not the case in Zimbabwe. Pazvakavambwa (2015, p. 43) claims that the integrated Results Based Management (RBM) was hand- picked and recommended to the Zimbabwean government by its developer, Rasappan (2010, p. 13), who explained and justified the RBM as "the application of RBM principles, approaches and methodology to all levels of development management in an integrated manner and systematically addresses the key factors that contribute to development results." The emphasis here is on the proven production of results at every organisation's level. In primary schools, this then translated into achieving good learners' academic performance at every grade. The key performance factors integrated by the RBM are development planning, budgeting, human resources, monitoring and evaluation and decision making (Rasappan, 2010, p. 13). These key factors come together in the ultimate production of improved programme performance or results production.

However, when the RBM system was adopted by the Ministry of Education to be implemented in schools, it was not modified to suit the human nature of the teaching profession. The directive

message was to 'produce credible learners' performance results at every grade level or else no salary increment for you' (Dandira et al., 2020). All these finer components of RBM were never communicated to the school heads and teachers (Mundondo et al., 2019). According to Thomas (2010, p. 2), "the cornerstone of RBM is its detailed focus on systematic performance measurement and its requirement for linkages to be established with policy making, resources management and programme performance management." It is argued that the detailed focus on systematic performance measurement is glaringly lacking in schools or simply misunderstood (Pazvakavambwa, 2015). The establishment of linkages with educational policy making, availability of resources and results oriented programme improvement is non-existent in schools (Pazvakavambwa, 2015; Mundondo et al., 2019; Dandira et al., 2020).

Rasappan (2010, p. 13), had recommended RBM to the government of Zimbabwe on the grounds that it was a strategic performance plan for the government as it focused on both clients' needs and on results at various stages of implementation such as resource allocation and utilisation, activity completion, output production and output achievement. These were the issues the government of Zimbabwe was grappling with especially in the industrial, economic and agricultural ministries (Madhekeni, 2012). The adoption of RBM in the schools was without moderations and modifications specific to the field of education (Dandira et al., 2020).

2.4.3 Some RBM models for consideration

Three other RBM models for consideration or for extracting suitable aspects to develop a more suitable home grown model for schools as posited by Pazvakavambwa (2015, p. 43-59) are:

a) The Logic Model

Mayne (2007, p. 2 in Mundondo et al., 2019), explained the logic model as "referring to the causal or logical sequence of activities, outputs and outcomes illustrating how it is expected that the intended outcomes of the programme will be brought about." The emphasis in this

explanation is on the 'how' of achieving high academic performance, that there should be logical, sequential methodologies and strategies put in place to achieve the intended targeted results. Vamahaki et al. (2018, p. 11) referred to the logic model as a "results chain of logically linked sets of results, some immediate and some more distant." A case of logically linked formative and summative performance results. Thomas (2010, p. 102), indicated that the logical model is divided into six hierarchical levels presented in a diagrammatic pyramid from the lowest to the highest. The levels are inputs, activities, outputs, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes and the ultimate outcome. As can be deduced, each level works towards one ultimate focus: the programme initiative.

b)The Conceptual Model

According to the African Development Bank Group (ADBG) (2005, p. 2 in Pazvakavambwa, 2015), the conceptual model requires "the organisation to start by formulating its vision so as to adopt the objectives that it considers as highly strategic priorities whose attainment have the maximum impact on development." Implied here is the notion that the organisation or the school has the prerogative to determine where it wants to see itself in the immediate and future in terms of performance results. The next step becomes the selection and matching of RBM objectives that best suit the realisation of the targeted vision.

The ADBG (2005) states that after the vision, the organisation then comes up with sectorial and thematic strategies. These are the strategic approaches which the school as an organisation intends to rely on in achieving the strategic goals and targets of the vision. In other words, the vision and strategy orientations serve as guidelines for defining priorities and determining the resources needed to realise the said priorities.

The ADBG (2005, p. 3) contends that the conceptual model "strengthens the effective attainment of the desired objectives and provides the tools needed to measure results through

the monitoring and evaluation framework." This means that after matching the objectives with its vision, the school can always refer and rely on the model's proffered tools of monitoring and evaluation on the progress of its performance targets.

The conceptual model has many other features but the contention that an organisation is given the latitude to select from it only those features that best meet their vision and context means that the details of the model do not warrant it to be discussed as it is inapplicable to Zimbabwe.

c) The Performance Improvement Model (PIM)

According to Bana and Shitindi (2009 in Pazvakavambwa, 2015, p. 9), Tanzania introduced a home grown RBM model known as the PIM which comprised of a four- stage process of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and performance reviews. The stages process indicate a straight forward model, not that complicated to effect. In the planning stage, Bana and Shitindi (2009) outlined issues of customer satisfaction surveys or needs analysis, with self-assessments and strategic and operational planning as the guiding principles. The last stage of performance reviews allows for revisions, moderations and improvement of the performance strategies in use.

It is evident that RBM models vary, with their strengths and weaknesses in terms of adaptability, suitability, practicality and usability (Pazvakavambwa, 2015; Vahamaki, 2018; Mundondo et al., 2019). It is usually not easy for an organisation to choose 'the model' that meets their needs, context and circumstances. It is asserted that the best way forward is for an organisation is to get well informed about all the models available and to be conversant with the guiding principles so as to make an informed decision (Madhekeni, 2012; Vahamaki, 2018). An ideal scenario is one in which an organisation is able to select aspects from various models and come up with its own model at the school.

2.4.4 Rationalising RBM in Schools

A convincing educational argument by the ministry of education had to be communicated for the RBM system to be introduced in schools. Armstrong (2009, p. 1), argued that institutionalising RBM in schools leads to more effective implementation since the individual schools would draw up more realistic school programmes and projects which they would monitor and evaluate more effectively. Pazvakavambwa and Steyn (2014) add that thinking in terms of expected results can strengthen planning and monitoring and it can reveal misunderstandings or disagreements on targeted goals among stake holders at an early stage. That way, RBM facilitates greater coordination and communication in the school. Gutuza (2016) agreed that clarifying what is meant by results helps the school to deal with differences in understanding before the school programme or project begins and to the value of communicating results to stake holders in a clear manner. Pazvakavambwa (2015, p. 32) earlier highlighted that clarifying results during planning and internal monitoring, prepares the school programmes and projects for meaningful evaluations. Deductively, therefore a school that knows what its results are, how to achieve and document them, is essentially is in a very good position to justify its case when external evaluations and funding are the next steps.

In that line of deduction, Armstrong (2009, p. 2), had argued that clear results planning produces more realistic schedules and subsequently forces schools to think through the preconditions for action and the resources needed to implement RBM. Pazvakavambwa (2015) and Gutuza (2016) concur that understanding performance results as part of an incremental results chain helps the school to identify where interventions are needed so as to adopt and adjust strategies of making a difference to the situation. The notion that teachers themselves can monitor progressive change as they work means that they own RBM and can make corrective lessons on modifications and adjustments of goals.

Pazvakavambwa (2015) contends that because of the values of the RBM cited above, there is

a consensus to develop a sustainable and effective RBM model for Zimbabwean schools in which outcomes are mutually defined and agreed upon by all stake holders to ensure acceptance, support, commitment and a shared understanding of what is to be achieved. In creating this ideal model, Pazvakavambwa (2015, p. 31) acknowledged the need to demystify the RBM system first and foremost. Meier (2003, p. 6) defines RBM as a "management tool targeted at realising changes in which organisations are run, with the attainment of results as the main focus." In this regard, the RBM gives the management framework tools of strategic planning, risk management and performance monitoring and evaluation (Bester, 2012, p. 9). In short, RBM is a necessary tool to manage the setting and attainment of school goals and the allocation of resources as informed by the performance results of the school programmes and projects.

2.4.4.1 Accountability of Schools

Madhekeni (2012, p. 125) argued that RBM ensured that schools became accountable. Accountability that could be measured through the active participation of key stake holders and partners in setting school targets, monitoring progress and ensuring that the lessons learnt from the experiences were included in the decision making by management. The Canadian Development Agency (CIDA) (2000, p. 5 in Dandira et al., 2020) and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) (2010, p. 10 in Mundondo et al., 2019) are in agreement that RBM is a participatory based management approach in which stake holders contribute to achieving results and it ensures that the organisational processes, products and services contribute to the realisation of targeted results. Therefore, demystifying RBM using definitions makes it a usable approach to implement in schools because it allows all stakeholders to participate in the setting of goals, the definition of results and sourcing the means to achieve the targeted results unlike when it is presented to schools as a complete package (Mundondo et al., 2019; Dandira et al., 2020). This transparency of processes and actions by schools reflects

accountability.

The UNDG (2010, p, 13), noted that the RBM system was viewed as "a life-cycle approach with elements of strategic planning that entails crafting the organisation's vision, mission and clients' charter in an effort to achieve the set objectives, while progress or retrogression is noted through monitoring and evaluation which serves to inform decision making and future deliberations". Put succintly, it becomes justifiable to implement a RBM approach in schools for accountability, transparency and progress. According to Pazvakavambwa (2015), Gutuza (2016) and Mundondo et al. (2019), institutionalising the RBM system in schools begins with an analysis and specification of the school's mandate, its clients and the benefits and impact that RBM is expected to deliver. To assist this process the following questions should be asked and answered by all stakeholders (Pazvakavambwa, 2015, p. 32):

1. Why does the school exist?
2. What would be lost if the school did not exist?
3. Who does it serve?
4. What are the school's deliverables?

With the RBM demystified, Pazvakavambwa (2015, p. 79-121), theorized from the data, six principles for developing a home grown sustainable RBM system for Zimbabwean schools derived from the best practices and approaches learned from organisations that had embraced RBM earlier in developed, developing countries and international organisations. These principles are detailed below:

1. Creating high-level leadership in schools.

2. Cultivating a results culture in schools. Vahamaki (2018, p. 19) listed a lack of results culture in organisations as one of the challenges in successfully implementing an RBM system.

3. Building the capacity to learn, adapt and adopt.

4. Developing an outcome framework with support and ownership.

5. Developing clear and concrete performance expectations.

6. Building compatible RBM systems.

Pazvakavambwa (2015) details the modalities of the six principles but since this study is not about a suitable model, the details were deemed not necessary. The information and discussion on RBM models are meant to strengthen the argument on identifying, selecting or even crafting a suitable model for implementation in the education sector. Precisely, it would be ideal for individual schools to select and modify their own model in accordance to their context, financial, material and personnel resource base so long as learners' improved performance is achieved and good academic results are posted.

2.4.5 The Performance Improvement Theory

To complement motivation theories, schools can also adopt some of the principles encapsulated within Performance Improvement theory in response to results management expectations. Performance Improvement theory is explained by Elger (2006 in Richey et al., 2011) and Walker and Caprar (2019) as concerned with measurable performance and shaping elements within a result-oriented system by applying its principle of implementation and change management. The theory can be used to improve the performance of organisations, processes and individuals by enforcing knowledge, capability and motive (Rummler and Brache 1995 in Richey et al., 2011; Apple and Wade, 2015). The implication of this theory is that schools as organisations through the school head can recruit or employ highly qualified and experienced teachers who have the know- how of interpreting and effectively putting into practice, the wide and new primary schools curriculum. In addition, schools can also conduct school-based staff development sessions on the current strategies and methods used globally to improve results.

The introduction of incentives in the form of better remuneration and other basic benefits by the schools (as hygiene factors) can also augment improved performance and service delivery.

The performance improvement theory's principle of implementation and change management also implies that schools can assess and test learners at end of grade six so as to select those that are capable of obtaining the expected results in the national grade seven examinations. Those deemed incapable can always be given the opportunity to repeat grade six or proceed with very close remedial tutoring and monitoring. This is in line with the theory's intervention, implementation and strategic performance support concepts. According to Elger (2006), Apple and Wade (2015) and Walker and Caprar (2019), the theory of performance develops and relates some foundational concepts to form a conceptual framework that can be used to explain performance improvement. According to Elger(2006 as cited in Walker and Caprar, 2019, p. 68), the foundation concepts are:

- Context. A theory of performance improvement informs learning in classrooms, workshops and other venues that are associated with learning.
- Knowledge and skills levels. As schools and teachers improve and advance the levels of performance, they develop deeper understanding of the teaching and learning concepts, improve skills levels and have more connection with the discipline of teaching. The acquisition of knowledge and skills cascades into more effective student learning, more effective research and improved results.
    - Identity, which includes personal and fixed factors. The more the schools and teachers become aware of their mission, goals and set targets within their settings and resources, they will be able to strategize using their strengths and available resources to improve the performance of their learners.

As can be deduced, the three concepts form a conceptual framework which resonates with

strategies of improving performance in organisations such as schools.

2.4.5.1 Performance Improvement Framework

Performance improvement theory provides a lens through which learner performance strategies can be implemented effectively to produce the desired results. The concepts of context, knowledge and skills and identity in performance improvement theory have been used to highlight how teachers' context, knowledge, skills and identity have influenced them to adopt and adapt strategies for improving learner performance in addition to curriculum implementation strategies. Sahlberg (2006), Fullan (2006) and Apple & Wade (2015) had long emphasized the importance of knowledge, context, teacher skills and expertise in implementing curriculum change. These concepts determine how motivated teachers will seek and implement learner performance improvement strategies and innovative curriculum implementation strategies.

In Zimbabwean primary schools, the achievement of improving learners' performance has been further enhanced by the new curriculum introduced in January 2017, discussed in chapter one.

2.5 The New Curriculum

This section interrogates new curriculum implementation motivation, theories and influencing factors. The discussion underlines how the raised issues impact on the strategies which schools and teachers employ in implementing the new curriculum which in turn have a ripple effect in raising learners' performance.

2.5.1 Motivation for the New Curriculum

Although changes are usually met with controversy and resistance, Chinangure and Chindaya (2019) speculate that the new curriculum is not likely to meet this fate because of the wide-ranging consultations which were done from grassroots that included the learners, parents, educators and all sectors that are linked to education. As such, schools and teachers are bound

to view these changes in the curriculum as inevitable challenges to prove their worth and relevance in the dynamism of the education context (Chinangure & Chindanya, 2019).

In a paper by Marume (2016), it is asserted that the new curriculum aims to support research, initiative and creativity in the 21st century in line with international education standards through its bias towards Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). An analysis of the new curriculum syllabi reveals that these subjects are now being introduced as early as Early Childhood Development (ECD) or pre-school termed Grade 0 in Zimbabwe (Dhlomo & Mawere, 2020). In this respect, by the time these Grade 0 learners reach the national Grade Seven examinations, they are very likely to perform well in the said learning areas due to continuity and development of concepts.

In support, the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE), Dr Lazarus Dokora, in his address to Heads of schools in the NewsDay Zimbabwe on 16 October 2017, pointed out that the new curriculum is meant to modernise the education system in line with new technologies and it will produce learners who are able to create employment as opposed to educating learners for employment. At the same workshop, Dr Makanda, the Director of Curriculum Development and Technical Services (CDTS) in the MoPSE added that the ministry aimed to produce learners who will not seek employment from the government but those who will create employment by taking advantage of the vast resources with which Zimbabwe is endowed.

In pursuance of the employment creation agenda, Dhlomo and Mawere (2019) note that the ministry has also introduced Visual and Performing Arts syllabi inclusive of music, theatre, film and dance from Grade 0 to secondary school. In that respect, Marume (2016) argues that there is no doubt that once the socio-economic quagmire deep seated in politics comes to an end, the Arts will be a lucrative source of income for talented individuals. According to the

Curriculum Development Unit (2021), the new curriculum has shifted from being content-based (examination bound) to a competency-based (outcomes oriented) curriculum which focuses on the learners' capacity to apply knowledge, skills and attitudes in an independent, practical and responsible way. It is contended that this would enable Zimbabwe to be competitive in its domestic market as well as engage gainfully in the global market (Curriculum Framework 2015-2022, p. 4). Implied here is that every school and class teacher would envisage producing such a learner at the end of a given level, more so at the end of primary school (Grade 7).

However, according to the Curriculum Implementation Code of the United States of America of November 9, (2009, p. 2), Howson and Kingsbury (2021) and Law (2022) without careful and continuous attention to implementation, planned changes in curriculum and teaching rarely succeed as intended. Thus, the discourse on the intended and implemented curriculum is raised as a red flag. The Code argues that the manner in which change is put in place determines how well it fares and highlights two components of any implementation effort that must be present to guarantee the success of the planned changes. These are:

1. The understanding of the conceptual framework of the content being implemented.
2. The organised assistance offered to understand the theory, observation of exemplary demonstrations, opportunities to practice and receive feedback (Nevenglosky et al., 2020, p. 453).

Bearing that in mind, the Zimbabwe curriculum change scenario can be argued to have observed and taken into consideration the Code's fundamentals since the Curriculum Framework (2015-2022) document was produced clearly spelling out the rationale and blue prints of implementation. How the above unfold is revealed in the current study's findings.

Jiaxiong (2017) writing on challenges faced in implementing a new curriculum in China outlines some new curriculum challenges. They include contradictions between curriculum

implementation and resource disparities caused by regional and economic differences, high requirements of the curriculum reforms and the teachers' low professional levels and inconsistencies between the curriculum and the schools' examination systems. These stated contradictions, disparities and inconsistencies also appear to present in Zimbabwe's new curriculum debate. Chinangure and Chindanya (2019) point out that there have been reports that some schools in rural Zimbabwe had not received comprehensive information on the new curriculum framework by January 2017 and had no inkling of the changes. Furthermore, Marume (2016) initially pondered whether the ministry will have sufficient numbers of qualified teachers to start new curriculum learning areas such as music, art, film, dance and the foreign languages for all the 5863 primary and 2424 secondary schools in Zimbabwe by 2017. According to the new curriculum, assessments would focus on learner competences that include knowledge, skills, abilities, values and traits termed 'exit profiles', which are very different from the traditional school reports (Curriculum Development Unit, 2021).

These observations highlight some of the dilemmas which were also likely to besiege the new curriculum in its implementation. The question that begs to be answered is: whether the schools and teachers were ready to shift their mind sets from exam orientations to competence based testing?

2.5.2 The lived experiences of implementing the new curriculum

The new curriculum has been in schools for almost five years now from 2017 when this study was in progress. It is therefore relevant to briefly capture the findings of studies on the lived experiences with regards to the implementation of the new curriculum. Zindi (2018) surveyed Zimbabwean teachers' concerns in implementing the new curriculum and established that teachers harboured negative and unconstructive feelings regarding the new curriculum. These feelings negatively impacted their involvement and commitment to implementing the changes. Zindi (2018) argued that teachers behaved in that negative manner because they were inadequately provided with professional development programmes that supported curriculum

implementation. It can be assumed that the new curriculum was not adequately explained to the implementers before commencement which triggered such negativity.

Addressing factors that adversely affected the new curriculum initiatives in Zimbabwe, Chinangure and Chindanya (2019) established that although the new curriculum offered solutions to the needs of the society, it was not supported by most stakeholders. This was because inadequate consultations, lack of implementation skills amongst teachers and education officials and lecturers, lack of resources and the unavailability of skilled personnel in some areas militated against effective new curriculum implementation. In a similar study, Ngwenya (2019) examined new curriculum implementation challenges encountered by primary school teachers in urban schools and recorded that although teachers had embraced the new curriculum, human, physical, material and financial resources were barriers to effective implementation. Attempts have been made in developing human capital through capacity building workshops but unfortunately the facilitators were never pragmatic (Ngwenya, 2019). Ngwenya's study resonated with this study as urban primary schools' efforts in new curriculum implementation was explored.

In a slightly different thrust, Dhlomo and Mawere (2019) analysed early childhood development centres' state of readiness to embrace the new curriculum and found that despite school heads and teachers deliberate attempts to implement the new curriculum, its conceptualization was not satisfactory. Early childhood development learning materials like textbooks and more fundamental ones like building blocks and ipads were glaringly lacking, hampering effective implementation of the new curriculum. Cited studies indicate that there are challenges of rationale, expertise, learning materials and financial resources disrupting the smooth implementation of the new curriculum. This study also aimed to establish the new curriculum implementation strategies employed by schools and teachers as these have a bearing on improving learners' academic performance.

2.5.3 Curriculum Change Theories

To undertake an informed study of the management of curriculum changes in Zimbabwe's Kwekwe urban schools, it is necessary to briefly discuss what the curriculum change theories offer.

Sahlberg (2006 drawing from Fullan's 2006 curriculum theory), Nevenglosky et al. (2020) and Law (2022) contend that curriculum change theory views curriculum change as a learning process for teachers and their schools, therefore a good understanding of change and a clear conception of the new curriculum are baseline conditions for the effective implementation of the changed curriculum. This contention implies that both teachers and schools have to learn the integral parts of the curriculum changes and be able to comprehend the conceptual framework before embarking on the implementation process. Sahlberg (2006) and Nevenglosky et al. (2020) state that the policy makers or the initiators of the changes in curriculum should make sure that teachers and schools as the implementers of the changes are well informed and educated on the changes and are conversant on the new conceptual framework. The wide-ranging consultations and staff development sessions carried out by the ministry of education in Zimbabwe alluded to earlier can be argued to have made an effort to educate and inform teachers and schools on the dictates of the new curriculum. Whether the teachers and schools fully understood the underlying principles, rationale and pedagogy of the new curriculum is a question that can only be answered after field research.

According to Sahlberg (2006, p. 613 cited in Law 2022) curriculum change theory hinges on three main factors, which are:

1. The use of change knowledge. As alluded to earlier, policy makers, education leaders and teachers need to know more about the drivers or methods of successful curriculum changes in schools. The need to learn about the educational changes is the integral element of major curriculum change processes and the aspect of taking all this as a learning process for all

stakeholders cannot be over emphasised. Educators need to be taught and learn about the changes to be in a position to implement them.

2. Re-conceptualising the curriculum. The argument in this case is that curriculum orientation should shift from the traditional concept of the curriculum as a product to a curriculum as a process. A paradigm shift in mind-sets is of necessity here. This would transform the curriculum from a purely technical document into a more comprehensive blueprint that serves as a guideline for change and also avoids producing a new curriculum that is overloaded, confusing and inappropriate for both teachers and learners (Marope, 2018). The Zimbabwean new curriculum promotes a competency- based approach which is realized through practical-oriented learning (Curriculum Framework 2015-2022, p. 4). Findings from this study indicated if the new curriculum implementation subscribed to the re-conceptualisation guidelines.

3. Changing the way teachers teach and learners learn requires specific approaches which are responsive to the curriculum change. Implied here is a completely new way of doing things. The contention is that this can be achieved by helping teachers create professional learning communities in which schools learn from each other's trials, errors and even successes in implementing the new curriculum, that is, their learning curves (Howson & Kingsbury, 2021).

Briefly, these three factors are crucial to be considered in curriculum change and implementation as they influence the implementation process. Curriculum change theory emphasises that curriculum changes are all just about changes. Nations, states and communities change or renew their curricula for different reasons (Marope, 2018). Some of these reasons may be that their existing curricula may not be what it should be or may no longer be responding to their changed needs or maybe because of the belief that changing the curricula would translate into changed and improved pass rates and performance in classrooms or for whatever the reasons best known to them. What is of paramount importance is how the change will happen. It is the how question that needs to be addressed by the policy makers, the change

champions and the change agents (teachers and schools) with all parties coming to a consensus. This study established whether the curriculum change players in Zimbabwe, that is the policy makers, made any provisions on how change will happen.

2.5.4 Conditions for implementation of curriculum change

Curriculum change implementation calls for relearning, change of mindsets and capacitation of both teachers and learners. Sahlberg (2006), Ng Soo (2019) and Nevenglosky et al. (2020) reiterated that in curriculum change theory, change is learning. A revisit to this conceptual thinking shows that adopting a new curriculum is a learning process which should be handled in the same way as an individual learns something new. This includes observing the conditions necessary for learning to take place as propounded by learning theorists. Constructivist learning theories argued by Makewa and Ngussa (2015), view learners as active builders of knowledge and understanding based on their previous knowledge structures, belief systems and life experiences. Kools (2020) cites that schools are also learning organisations with different capacities to learn and change based on their traditions, capacities and beliefs, in other words, their organizational culture. This realisation should be borne in mind by any curriculum change proponents. According to Ng Soo (2019), the realisation can be achieved through the diffusion of the change information to raise awareness of the changes, in-service training of teachers to increase their knowledge base and equip them with relevant skills of implementing the new curriculum as well as disseminating support materials such as teachers' guides, syllabi and other resources enabling the intended changes. Later on in this thesis, this aspect of the Zimbabwean curriculum change is discussed in the new curriculum findings.

Curriculum change theories also emphasise the fundamental realisation that change involves grappling with new beliefs, understanding skills and behaviours which inevitably mean that change implementation might not happen smoothly especially at onset (Sahlberg, 2006; Ng Soo, 2019; Law, 2022). Challenges and obstacles to change are inevitable but change planners

need to prepare adequately to achieve the proper implementation which they anticipated (Phillips & Klein, 2022). This study established whether Zimbabwe focused on this at the implementation stages.

2.5.4.1 Brief curriculum change history

The seminal work of Tyler (1949) on curriculum theory which relied on Bobbitt (1918)'s emphasise the concepts of 'rationality' and 'relative simplicity', which can influence curriculum change. Curriculum change theorists like Taba (1962) based their work on the assumptions of the Tylerian rationalist thinking which stress the need for the curriculum to be dynamic, constantly evaluated and revised. It is this manner of approaching curriculum change that has translated into treating curriculum change as a product. This has commonly been accepted and used by many education systems including Zimbabwe which is selling the new curriculum as a product without compromise (Marume, 2016; Marovah et al., 2020).

However, the product approach has since been challenged by other curriculum theorists like Doll (1993), Fullan (2006) and Sahlberg (2006). The general concerns have been related to the overall mind-set of teaching and learning on which the product approach is underpinned, undermining the dynamism and unpredictability of human interactions, influence and experiences (Abie, 2014, Makaye, 2014; Marovah et al., 2020). It is a general assumption that this same stance has posed problems in the implementation of the new curriculum in 2017 Zimbabwe.

2.5.5 Curriculum change premises

Fullan (2006), Mukewa and Ngussa (2015) and Howson & Kingsbury (2021) claim that change theory or change knowledge can be very powerful in informing education reform strategies and in turn getting results, but only when it is in the hands of people who have a deep knowledge of the dynamics of how the factors in question operate. Bearing this in mind, the question that

begs to be answered is the readiness and commitment of Zimbabwe's curriculum change architects and change agents to effectively implement the new curriculum. Change architects plan and disseminate the curriculum changes, hence they should have knowledge of how the change dynamics function, whereas the change agents such as teachers need to know the composition of the change content and its rationale (Howson & Kingsbury, 2021). Does the latter have a deep knowledge of the factors at play and that of the contents of the new curriculum? This question is partially answered in the analysis of the findings on the implementation of the new curriculum.

The seven factors or premises underlined by Fullan (2006, p.537 as cited in Law 2022) are:

1. A focus on motivation. All theories of change come down to the concept of motivation. Fullan (2006) asserts that if one's theory of action or change does not motivate people to put in the effort, individually or collectively that is necessary to get results, change is therefore not possible (Makaye, 2014; Ng Soo, 2019). It is therefore important in the analysis of the new curriculum in Zimbabwe to establish how motivating it is to the change agents. Whatever the strategy of new curriculum implementation used, it is argued that it should first and foremost address the motivation question. It is therefore not by coincidence that this study is underpinned by theories of motivation.

2. Capacity building which is defined as any strategy that increases the collective effectiveness of a group to raise the bar on results. Capacity building involves helping people develop individual and collective knowledge and competencies, resources and motivation (Kirby, 2019). Again, the issues of learning and motivation come out clearly as pivotal to pursuant of change. Curriculum change agents should therefore be conversant about the new curriculum and motivated to implement it. The theory of change recommends that capacity building should also capture both pressure and support (Fullan, 2006; Kirby, 2019). Positive pressure that motivates is fair and reasonable and is complemented by resources. Implied here is the idea

that in enforcing curriculum change, positive pressure as described should be applied on change agents for them to effect the changes. Fullan (2006) and Kirby (2019) argue that in change theory, capacity building is the key and should always be the first step for change architects or policy makers, to make sure that the implementers are knowledgeable, motivated and have the resources before implementation can begin.

3. Learning in context. Elmore (2009 as cited in Marovah et al., 2020) advises that strategies for reform or change must have many opportunities for learning in context, creating cultures where learning in context is endemic. The implication here is that as changes are ushered in, change agents should be accorded the opportunity to learn about the changes while putting them into practice within the context of their environments. This will enable better grasp of the essence of the intended changes, highlight areas that need to be fine- tuned and a clearer way forward. A case of putting theory into practice in one's own settings. In curriculum changes, schools can also learn from each other's challenges and successes they are experiencing in implementing the new curriculum.

4. Changing the context. Fullan (2006 as cited in Law, 2022) pinpoints that the theory of change highlights that in change action, there should be room to change the larger context. The capacity to change the larger context simply means the bigger context in which change agents operate should incorporate the other premises or factors such as promoting capacity building and being motivating. This will in turn lead to lateral capacity building in which schools and districts learn from each other. When this happens, two change forces will be unleashed namely knowledge and motivation (Jalagat, 2016; Errida & Lotfi, 2021). As can be seen, the fourth change factor simply reiterates on the previous change premises, implying that learning to gain knowledge, shared experiences about changes and being motivated are crucial cornerstones for change movement which can never be underestimated. As schools implement the new curriculum, staff development seminars in which new knowledge and sharing of experiences is on the agenda should be an on-going event.

5. A bias for reflective action. According to Fullan (2006), Jalagat (2016) and Phillips and Klein (2022), a bias for reflective action fuels the other premises or actions to move forward in sync. In this case change knowledge facts are very specific and these are shared visions and ownership. The implication is that change agents should understand the intended changes and be part of the change planning process so that they feel they own the changes; that the change is theirs, so that implementation can flow smoothly. Reflective action goes back to the early works of Dewey (as cited in Popova, 2014), who offered the insight that it is not that we learn by doing but that we learn by thinking about what we are doing, that is reflecting. It is about purposeful thinking that enables one to gain conceptual insights or knowledge while doing (Popova, 2014; Jalagat, 2016; Errida & Lofti, 2021). Fullan (as cited in Law, 2022) concludes that people learn best through doing, reflection or thinking, inquiry or asking and more doing or action. This means new curriculum implementation knowledge can be gained by schools implementing it, thereby according staff an opportunity to question and seek alternatives for abstract or misunderstood concepts.

6. Tri-level engagement. This refers to schools working with the community, district and the state as the three partners in the change effects. Fullan (as cited in Law, 2022) argues that permeable connectivity must be fostered, meaning pursuing strategies that promote mutual interaction and influence within and across the three levels, making the change possible and effective. In simple terms this means an open communication channel in which feedback on implementation challenges, interventions and successes are communicated amongst the three partners (Gonzalez, 2018; Sadler et al., 2022).

7. The seventh and last factor or premise in Fullan (as cited in Law, 2022)'s recommendations is the persistence and flexibility in staying on course. This means that the change theory acknowledges the need to persist and be open to constructive criticism in the course of effecting changes. It takes resilience or persistence and flexibility to keep pushing in the face of inevitable barriers. Fullan (2006), Jalagat (2016) and Phillips and Klein (2022) contend that

being flexible is inbuilt in the change theory because the theory is reflective and inquiry based, and because it is cultivated in the minds of the key players operating with a similar theory of action, there is, therefore, plenty room for self-correction and refinement of implementation strategies. In other words, this is a case of monitoring and evaluation of the new curriculum implementation process.

The seven premises of change knowledge capture the underlying thinking of effective change strategies (Fullan, 2006) or the change theory. It is therefore essential in curriculum change implementation, Zimbabwe's case included, to have a summative understanding of the change knowledge and the need to monitor and evaluate, give feedback as the changes are being effected or implemented. These seven factors underpin the analysis of the new curriculum implementation in Zimbabwe for this current study. Sahlberg (as cited in Errida & Lotfi, 2021) concludes curriculum change theory analysis by underlining the three key conditions as the acquisition of change knowledge, the re-conceptualisation of the curriculum and changing the ways teachers teach and learners learn (a pedagogical shift). When these three conditions are taken cognizance of, it is argued that curriculum change would occur at a smoother and swifter rate. Concurrently, managing the said curriculum changes is also fundamental in facilitating a smooth and swift flow in the implementation process (Errida & Lotfi, 2021).

2.5.6 Curriculum Change Management

Introducing curriculum changes in educational institutions can be a challenging endeavor especially when the changes are not managed expertly. According to Kristonis (2006), Nevenglosky et al. (2020) and Phillips and Klein (2022), organisations (schools included) have an inherent nature to be conservative and protect themselves from change. Therefore, ways of managing or coping with change have to be sought and applied so that change managers and change agents welcome the changes. However, before the change agents acquire the change

managing strategies, there is a need for both the change managers and change agents to understand and appreciate the pre-conditions or mental psyches that are experienced during the introduction of changes. An early model of change management developed by Kurt Lewin (1951) and later adapted by Hughes (1991 in Ng Soo, 2019) described change as a three-stage process of unfreezing or exit, transit or when change occurs and refreezing or entry. A detailed review of the three-stage process informs both the change managers and change agents about the changes; the reactions to change that are likely to occur and stipulate interventions. In short, making change management possible.

In change management, as put forward by Kristonis (as cited in Errida & Lotfi, 2021) the role of the policy makers and administrators is therefore to calculate the impact a change is likely to have on employee behaviour patterns, work processes, technological requirements and motivation. Management must also assess and have an estimate of employee reactions so as to craft a programme that will provide support for workers as they embrace the process of change (Jalagat, 2016; Errida & Lofti, 2021). Effective change management requires an understanding and appreciation of the possible effects of change on people and will also address how to contain the potential causes of resistance to change (Phillips & Klein, 2022). Literature is undated with possible models and theories of change management that cannot be discussed in detail in this context but they all sum up that change is inevitable, however it needs to be rationalised, planned, communicated, understood, accepted and evaluated. Change that is imposed is likely to stall while that which is participatory is likely to be effectively implemented (Kools, 2020). It is asserted that the opinions, views and contributions of change agents should not be overridden and taken for granted but collectively sought and given due considerations as these are the people who will eventually determine the change outcome (Abie, 2014).

Peretomode and Ikoya (as cited in Makaye, 2014) made the following observations which resonate with the curriculum changes in Zimbabwe; that there is nothing easy about the process

of change and that effective management of change is sine qua non to the successful implementation and institutionalisation of curriculum change in order to achieve the desired goals. On that note, the two authors warn that before managing the change, the curriculum reforms should be seen to cater for the needs of all in society, that the resources are available to all learners' communities and that there is provision of different abilities in the new curriculum. Commenting on Zimbabwe' new curriculum, Muzira & Bondai (2020) argued it can be justifiably argued that this has been done through the wide ranging consultations and needs analysis carried out with all stakeholders as highlighted in the Curriculum Framework (2015-2022). The idea that learners' exit profiles will now include various attributes like the visual arts, attitudes and skills is an assurance that there is catering for learners' different abilities and aptitudes. It is the issue of equitable distribution of resources and materials to all corners of the country that is of concern (Marume, 2016; Marovah et al., 2020; Muzira & Bondai, 2020).

Peretomole and Ikoya (2010) present a blue print to successfully manage curriculum change that includes an authoritarian or directive style as most appropriate in antagonistic environments; participative styles and the coalition of opinion leaders as appropriate in neutral environments. The democratic style has been recommended as the modus operandi in supportive environments. The policy makers in Zimbabwe anticipated the three mentioned forms of reactions to change in using all the three styles of effectively managing the new curriculum. As already discussed, this was done through the induction of Heads of schools, followed by that of grade one and three teachers (who had to pioneer the new curriculum) on new curriculum rationale and new syllabi interpretation. The new curriculum has since become a matter of policy to be implemented with no compromise (Makaye, 2014; Marova et al., 2020; Muzira & Bndai, 2020).

2.5.7 Critical factors in implementing curriculum innovations

As Zimbabwe has taken the very bold step of overhauling its primary and secondary school curricula and introducing a new one, it is of note to discuss some of the factors that influence the smooth implementation of curriculum innovations (Marovah et al., 2020). The implementation of curriculum innovations is a process of carrying out what has been planned which consists of using new materials, engaging in new behaviours and practices as well as incorporating new beliefs (Fullan, 2006; Makaye, 2014). As such, Koo (2009, p. 241 as cited in Ng Soo, 2019) proposed three underlying perspectives or approaches in adopting curriculum innovation or a new curriculum as is the case in Zimbabwe, and these are the fidelity, mutual adaptation and enactment.

The Fidelity Perspective

This measures the degree of faithfulness to the intended innovation. Snyder et al. (1992 in Orafi, 2013), Cutbrush et al. (2016) and Iskander (2020) argue that since the aim of this approach is to measure the degree to which a particular innovation is implemented as planned, it is therefore essential to identify factors which facilitate and inhibit the implementation. The interpretation of this perspective is that as curriculum innovations bring forth a lot of changes and new ways of doing things; factors that may influence the implementation should be taken into consideration before the onset of the new curriculum so that there is no disparity between the planned curriculum and what is actually happening on the ground (Iskander, 2020).

The Mutual Adaptation

This perspective emphasises on how the innovation is adopted during the implementation process. According to Cutbrush et al. (2016) and Koo (2009 in Ng Soo, 2019) the assumption underlying this perspective is that implementation is a mutual modification that includes modification of needs, interests, skills, goals and methods of the users during implementation. Fullan (as cited in Law, 2022) explained that the adaptation approach assumed that the exact nature of implementation of a curriculum innovation cannot and should not be pre-specified but rather evolve as different groups of users decide what is best and most appropriate for their

situation. The interpretation of this perspective is very straight forward, which is that, as the new curriculum is being ushered in, expectations that schools and teachers will definitely modify or adjust certain aspects to suit their needs, knowledge, teaching objectives and methods as necessitated by their contexts, should not be overlooked (Abie, 2014; Kools, 2020). This means that as curriculum planners plan the new curriculum, these considerations should be borne in mind and room left for them in the crafting of the expected ideals. Snyder et al. (1999 in Orafi (2013) and Iskandar (2020), remarked that mutual adaptation is seen as that process whereby adjustments in a curriculum are made by those who actually use it in the school and classroom context, implying a certain amount of negotiation and flexibility on the part of both designers and practitioners. Therefore, this means that the implementation of a new curriculum should become a matter of compromise and mutual understandings; that in as much as it will be implemented as intended some adjustments as befitting the different users and contexts will be made.

The Enactment Perspective

This looks at how the new curriculum is put into practice by both teachers and learners during implementation. Snyder et al. (1992 in Orafi (2013) and Cutbrush et al. (2016) explain this approach as how the new curriculum is shaped by the evolving constructs of teachers and learners; the concerns being on how the constructs are created, the effects of outside factors on the enacted curriculum and the effects of the enacted curriculum on the students. The curriculum enactment perspective therefore assumes that curriculum knowledge is a personal construct which must reflect both personal and external standards, change being a developmental process for both teachers and learners (Kools, 2020; Iskander, 2020). Snyder et al. (1992 in Orafi, 2013) emphasised that the role of the teacher becomes one of a curriculum developer who grows more competent with his or her learners in constructing positive educational experiences. The interpretation of the enactment perspective becomes the understanding of the new knowledge

by both teachers and learners and the experiences they gain as they implement the new teaching-learning experiences into their existing knowledge (Cutbrush et al., 2016; Kools, 2020).

A summary of the perspectives indicate that effective implementation of curriculum innovations relies more on the faith that the new curriculum will be implemented as planned. Modifications and adjustments can be made by the teachers as implementers in accordance to their needs and objectives as dictated by their contexts and experiences. These are the underlying baselines which need to be taken into cognisance by the curriculum designers and policy makers as they craft and introduce changes and new knowledge into the education system.

2.5.8 Factors influencing curriculum innovation implementation

Building on the underlying perspectives, Fullan 2006 and Koo (2009 in Fisher, 2021) came up with factors which influence curriculum innovation implementation and put them under three broad categories of characteristics of change. The first category included the nature and relevance of change, clarity, complexity, quality and practicality. A breakdown of these change characteristics assists in making an innovation easier to implement.

The second broad category of factors that influence curriculum innovations suggested by Koo (as cited in Fisher, 2021) are what he termed, the local characteristics. These are made up of the school and district, board and community, the role of school principal and teacher orientations characteristics. Defined roles of the stakeholders in innovation implementation alleviate repetitions, role overlaps and confusions.

The third broad category of factors suggested by Koo (2009 as cited in Fisher, 2021) is what he termed external factors. He claims that the influence of the government and other external organisations could affect the degree of implementation if there is lacking role clarity, ambiguity and regular interpersonal forums of communication.

These factors resonate with the Zimbabwean situation, where the new curriculum is argued to being imposed upon schools by the government (Marovah et al., 2020). What remains to be seen is whether the roles are clear as to who does what and when. The issue of a two way open communication between the government and the schools is also another area of concern. The availing of resources, finances and channels of feedback concerning the implementation of the new curriculum is yet another worrisome concern (Marovah et al., 2020).

The factors discussed highlight the influences on the implementation of innovations or new curricula as far as teachers, learners, events, contexts and resources are concerned. Curriculum theorists like Fullan (as cited in Law, 2022) stress that these factors cannot be understood in isolation but rather holistically since they form the nexus of the variables. Variables which should be taken into account in the initial crafting and planning of new knowledge so that implementation smooth sails. A summary of these factors reveal that teachers play a pivotal part in the success of innovations or new curriculum implementation. Koo (as cited in Fisher, 2021) remarked that successful implementation of innovations is most likely to come about through a system that has developed an ethos of collegial relationships and support among teachers. Snyder et al. (1992 in Orafi, 2013) call these relationships collaboration and cooperation among teachers. Furthermore, Hargreaves and Evans (1994 in Orafi, 2013) explain that collaboration implied and created stronger interdependence, shared responsibility, collective commitment and readiness to participate in the difficult business of reviews and critique. Drawing from these remarks and explanations it therefore implies that for a curriculum innovation to be implemented successfully, teachers' concerns, context, knowledge bases and participation in the planning stages should be important considerations (Priestley et al., 2015).

Strengthening the collaboration and cooperation debate, Penuel et al. (2007 in Priestley et al.,

2015) in their research on strategies that foster curriculum implementation, concentrated on professional development concerns, that is, issues to do with how teachers have been educated or staff developed to implement new curricula. The authors came up with seven factors which include reform oriented professional development, duration and time span, the role of colleagues, focus on professional development, active learning, coherence and local support barriers. An examination of these seven factors in professional development legitimizes teachers as the core in the implementation of innovations and new curricula. The methods and strategies used in informing them of the changes is therefore a crucial element in the effective and successful implementation of the intended changes (Nevenglosky et al., 2020). Policy makers and curriculum designers would benefit from knowing and considering these factors when they conduct workshops and staff development seminars on innovations and changes in the curriculum.

Orafi (2013) in his research on effective factors influencing teachers' implementation of innovations came up with five underlying factors which are the nature of the innovation highlighting its originality, complexity, clarity and triability, the role of teachers' beliefs, training and development, the socio-cultural context and the examination system. A summary of Orafi (2013)'s findings show that these factors can influence the adoption of a new curriculum much more quickly and effectively if they are given due considerations at planning stages (Makaye, 2014; Marovah et al., 2020). The sum total of the discussion on factors influencing the effective implementation of curriculum changes and innovations has revealed that these factors are underpinned by the approaches or perspectives used in introducing the changes. They are also hinged on the characteristics of the innovations, the teachers' beliefs, behaviours, interpretation frames and the nature of their training. The socio-cultural context of

schools and the restructuring of the examination system also have an influence. When all these issues are addressed at planning and designing stages, then curriculum changes and innovations are certain to enjoy effective implementation.

2.5.8.1 Curriculum Change Management Framework: An Understanding

Primary schools and teachers' efforts to raise learners' academic performance is couched against the backdrop of RBM and the new curriculum implementation. The ushering in of the new curriculum in Zimbabwean primary schools in 2017 added another motivator for teachers to seek curriculum implementation strategies that would cascade into improved learners' performance. With that in focus, it became imperative to look at curriculum change management theories as they guided and provided the lens through which the teachers' motive for implementing the new curriculum could be understood and analysed.

A synopsis of the discussion on curriculum change management theories (Fullan, 2009: Orafi, 2013: Jalagat, 2016: Ng Soo, 2019: Phillips and Klein, 2022) can be crystallised into the following guiding concepts:

- ***Knowledge*** of the nature and rationale of curriculum change, including how that change is communicated and diffused. Knowledge of the new curriculum levels up as the motivator for implementation. Teachers as agents of change in curriculum implementation and implementers of that change should be conversant with all the attributes, goals and manifestations of that change. Teachers are supposed to own that change. The study seeks to analyse and establish the extent to which teachers as implementers know and own the new curriculum as this has ripple effects in coming up or selecting effective implementation strategies.
- ***Complexity*** of the curriculum change. This determines the smooth implementation of the new curriculum or the said changes. The more complex the curriculum change is, the more difficult are the challenges of implementation. Complexity of curriculum

change is also compounded by the level of expertise required to implement the changes. In this study, the teachers' abilities in terms of skills and qualifications will come under analysis as they respond to the questions of challenges they are meeting in the new curriculum implementation process.

- ***Context*** plays a pivotal role in curriculum change management theories. Context in curriculum change implementation encompasses the suitability of the changes to the intended, the availability of infrastructural and material resources and the nature of the school settings to effectively implement the expected changes. The data gathering and analysis of this study will therefore focus on these factors since they affect and effect implementation strategies (Fullan, 2009: Orafi, 2013: Jalagat, 2016: Ng Soo, 2019: Phillips and Klein, 2022).

2.5.8.2 Summary of Theoretical Framework Analysis

A diagrammatic analysis of the theoretical linkages can be summarised as follows:

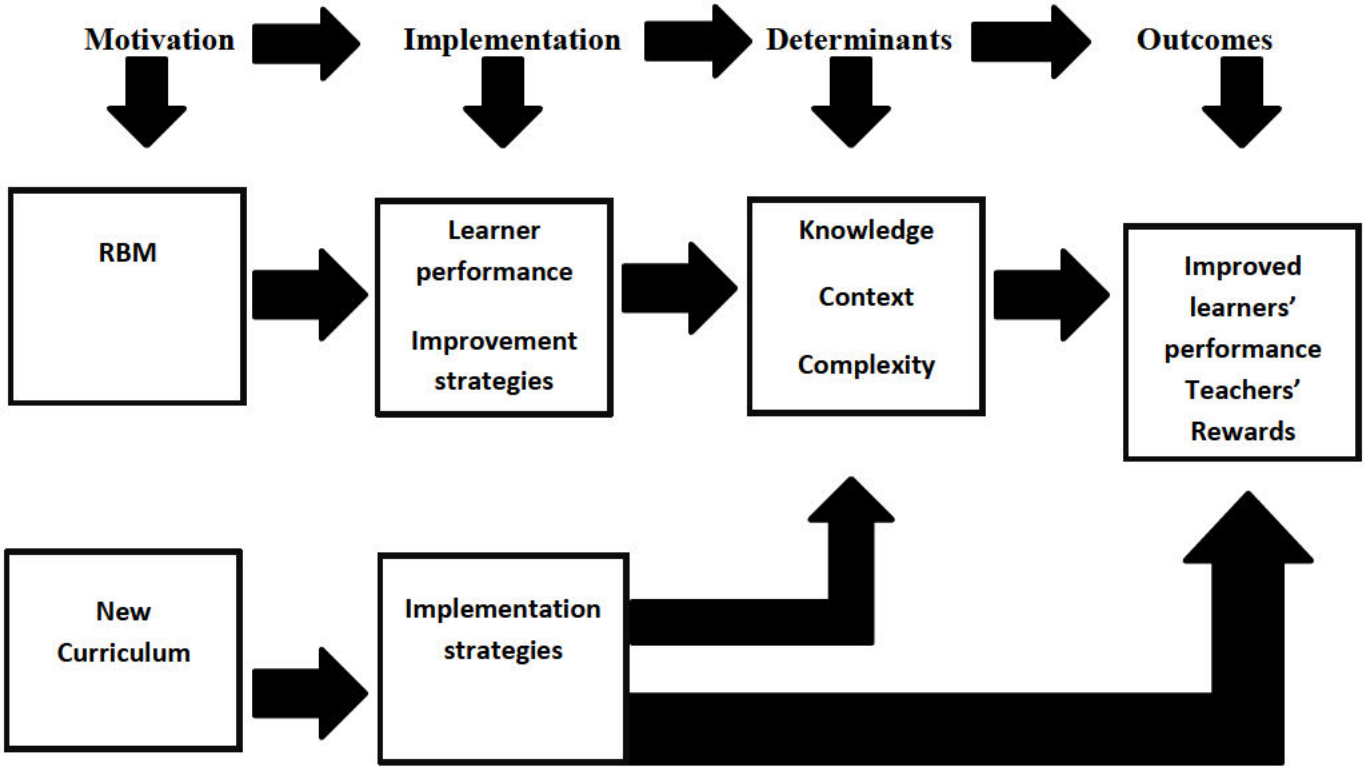

Figure 2.3 Theoretical Linkages (my own model developed from the above theories)

Basic teacher education and training modules emphasize the importance of educational psychology in teaching and learning. In a study on strategies employed by teachers to raise the performance of their learners, it would be remiss not to discuss some fundamental psychological principles underpinning effective teaching and learning. In addition, the value of teachers' beliefs have been highlighted in curriculum implementation. According to the American Psychological Association Coalition for Psychology in Schools and Education (APACPSE, 2015), teaching and learning are intricately linked to social and behavioural factors of human development, including cognition, motivation, social interaction and communication. Psychological science therefore provides key insights on effective teaching and classroom environments that promote learning and appropriate use of assessment, data, tests, measurements and research methods that inform practice.

The APACPSE (2015) researchers carried out an intensive study to establish the basic principles underlining effective teaching and learning in the classrooms. The principles established by these researchers have since been put into practice and validated by Stamp (2019) and the Western PA Healthcare Team (2020). Some of the main principles established that have direct effects on raising learners' performance include:

- Students' beliefs or perceptions about their intelligence and ability affect their cognitive functioning and learning.
- Learners' assumed knowledge affects their learning.
- Learners' cognitive development and learning are not limited by stages of development.
- Learning occurs in context.
- Clear, explanatory and timely feedback to learners is important for learning.
- Learners tend to enjoy learning and perform better when they are more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated to achieve.

- Learners persist in challenging tasks and process information in depth when they adopt mastery rather than performance goals.
- Teachers' expectations about their learners affect learners' opportunities to learn, their motivation and their learning outcomes.
- Formative and summative assessments are both important and useful but require different approaches and interpretations.

These principles draw attention to the art of teaching and learning. In their efforts to raise learners' performance, strategic schools and teachers would be better equipped in delivering effective strategies when these principles underpin their approaches. The stated principles reiterate the earlier discussed literature centering on the importance of context in learning, the effects of timely feedback, the impact of teachers' expectations and the need for continuous assessment. The discussion on the psychological principles of teaching and learning is meant to add value on the strategies that teachers can employ in their efforts to raise the performance of their learners. The discussion has also shed light on the entity of teaching and learning, that it is not about the attainment of academic results only but other skill sets, principles, norms and values acquired in the process under set conditions and effective teaching.

2.6.1 Teaching for life

In light of the psychological principles of teaching and learning with an emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values, Price-Mitchell (2016) conceptualised valuable strategies for teaching, not only for improving learners' performance, but also for success in life. Price-Mitchell (2016, p. 473) claimed that unless information is processed, organised and applied, 'knowledge can become a source of frustration rather than fulfillment'. She contends that children learn to use and apply knowledge as they gain skills in organising, decision making and problem solving. These skills are the building blocks of resourcefulness.

Resourcefulness is defined by Lee (2018) as the ability to find and use available resources to achieve goals. When learners imagine multiple outcomes, set objectives, experiment with new approaches and negotiate challenges, make important connections between knowledge and goal achievement, they become conscientious creators of their own futures (Lee, 2018, p. 47). Genc (2016, p. 49) argues that high grades and test score are not reliable indicators of resourcefulness as many teachers have come to know quite a number of bright learners who struggle to resolve everyday problems. Genc (2016) argues that being resourceful takes more than cognitive skill; it takes the ability to process information emotionally and intellectually. Research has shown that resourceful learners are not only better at achieving their goals, but also respond better under stress, which adversely impacts the grades of learners who are low on resourcefulness (Lee, 2018, p. 43).

Price-Mitchell (2016, p. 85) and Genc (2016) concur on the following strategies to foster resourcefulness:

1. Teach resourcefulness. One of the best ways for learners to understand resourcefulness is through the stories of resourceful people, who were able to see beyond everyday solutions, did not give up when problems got complicated and learnt from mistakes.

2. Apply knowledge of problem-solving to new situations using the principles of problem-solving such as, understanding the problem, devising a plan, carrying out the plan, looking back and extending the problem. Teachers should look for opportunities to connect the principles of problem-solving in a variety of learning areas and real world experiences. This gives learners practice in generalising and applying what they have learnt in a variety of contexts and all aspects of life.

3. Encourage the use of technology. The abundance of technology to help learners become more resourceful and productive like mind mapping can help them better understand problems and devise plans by visualising connections, outlining different sides of issues and determining

next steps. Even play stations can be helpful in mind mapping.

4. Help learners to reflect on their problem-solving processes by teaching them to review their thinking processes like what they would do differently next time.

5. Promote independence and collaboration. Although they may seem like opposites, learners should be able to decide which tasks are best accomplished alone and which benefit from teamwork. When learners take part in planning and decision making on classroom projects, they experience first-hand what produces good results and what does not.

6. Teach learners the art of positive scepticism. Kyriacou (2019) explains scepticism as the need to find additional evidence before accepting someone's claim as true. Kyriacou (2019) adds that being resourceful means developing the ability to look at multiple solutions for a single problem. It also requires a dose of scepticism and teachers can demonstrate and model positive scepticism in the classroom by proving and testing given facts especially in Mathematics and Science.

7. The Flipped classroom. A flipped classroom is an instructional strategy which incorporates blended learning in that it increases learners' participation (Price-Mitchell, 2016). Learners are tasked with homework activities like reading or research topics for further interrogation later in class. Trach (2020) argues that one of the values of the flipped classroom is a teacher's ability to provide differentiated teaching and encouraging learners to work at their own pace. Instead of associating planning, organising and problem-solving mostly with homework, teachers can observe these processes in the classroom (Trach, 2020). This allows teachers to see when learners hit hurdles that get in the way of them accomplishing their goals and to intervene.

Price-Mitchell (2016) has advanced resourcefulness as the cornerstone for teaching for life success. In fact, resourcefulness in both the learner and the teacher is a necessary quality required when targeting improved academic performance in the RBM system and in implementing new curriculum concepts.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed and discussed literature on pertinent concepts and phenomena related to this study' research questions and the theories underpinning the study. These include motivation theories, change and change management theories, performance improvement theories, factors influencing implementation and strategies in which schools can improve academic results. Psychological principles in the teaching-learning process and strategies for teaching for life have been added to provide an added theoretical insight to raising learners' performance. The concepts discussed in this chapter have a bearing on teachers as they make efforts to raise performance against the backdrop of results management and implementation of a new curriculum. The next chapter discusses and justifies the research design, methodology and research instruments used in addition to trustworthiness, ethics and sampling criterion.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research study sought to explore the strategies used by schools and teachers to achieve good results against the backdrop of Results Based Management (RBM) and the new curriculum crafted by the Ministry of Education in Zimbabwe. The researcher sampled three schools in the case study with the research leaning on the principles of qualitative research within an interpretivist paradigm. It explored how schools and teachers in these schools interpreted RBM and the new curriculum, and what strategies they employed in an attempt to fulfill the expectations and demands of this new requirement and achieve success. As the researcher was interested in interacting with the schools' management team and teachers to establish their strategies for improving results, the research paradigm was interpretivist in nature.

3.2 Interpretivism

Given the social settings and qualitative nature of the research study, interpretivism was the central focus in which the study was immersed. Marshall and Rossman (2006), Ryan (2018) and Crossman (2020) concur in explaining that interpretivism is significantly influenced by the settings in which human actions occur. Ideally, "Human activities, experiences, events and processes will not be understood unless the meanings those humans assign to them is understood" (Norviewu-Mortty, 2012, p.7). In advancing the human centredness of interpretivism, Ryan (2018) points out that interpretivism argues that truth and knowledge is subjective, culturally and historically situated based on lived experiences and an understanding

of them. As a researcher, I probed to access the lived experiences of the participants in order to understand their reality from their perspectives, within their settings and context, hence an interpretivist orientation to the study. Thanh and Thahn (2015) acknowledge that researchers who function within the interpretive paradigm often seek experiences, understandings and perceptions of participants for their data to uncover reality, which was the thrust of this current study. Yanov and Schwartz-Shea (cited in Pulla & Carter, 2018) lend more weight by highlighting that interpretivist researchers discover reality through participants' views, their own background and experiences. There exists the notion that researchers usually research issues familiar to their background and experiences, which also resonates with me and the current study. In support of this view, Marrelli (2017) highlights that a researcher can never be completely separate from their values and beliefs and these will inevitably influence the way in which data is generated, interpreted and analysed.

In validating the social context component in interpretivism, Wilson (2015) explains that interpretivism seeks to understand a particular context and the core belief of the interpretive paradigm is that reality is socially constructed. Earlier, Phothongsunan (2010), Pulla and Carter (2018) and Krmac (2022) emphasizing the social context of interpretivism, indicated that interpretive researchers seek to explore how participants perceive and make sense of this world. Thomas (cited in Dawadi et al., 2021) had also argued that because the interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world from the subjective experiences of participants, it stresses the need to analyse the context. Thus, Ryan (2018) summarised that interpretivism is hinged on participants' meanings generated through social interactions and that these meanings can be adapted according to the individual's perception of the situation or their experiences in that context. Therefore, research within interpretivism becomes the construction of meanings between the participants and the researcher.

3.2.1 Context in Interpretivism

As context plays a vital part in interpretivism, this research sought to establish how schools and teachers, in their specific school context, raised the performance of their learners and implemented the new curriculum using their experiences, perceptions and interpretations of which strategies enhanced learning and assisted to improve learner performance. The researcher, as a participant observer derived meanings from interpreting the data. Linking subjectivity and context, Wilson (2015) and Pulla and Carter (2018) pointed out that interpretive research is more subjective than objective because the goal of interpretivism is to value subjectivity as it accepts multiple viewpoints of different individuals who are influenced by their experiences in their specific context, thus highlighting that there is a link between their context and their experiences. Participants' views and opinions are held in high esteem in interpretivism and this lends weight to subjectivity in the sense that the interpretation of reality and knowledge is determined by forces, circumstances and experiences within the context of those whose opinions are sought (Ryan, 2018, p. 352). In support, Crossman (2020) believes that interpretivists are anti-foundationalists because there is no particular right or correct path to knowledge. The researcher's interpretation of events and data is therefore also subject to the experiences and situations in the context of the research, hence subjectivity.

Pursuing the subjectivity and context argument, much earlier, Phothongsunan (2010) and Pulla and Carter (2018) acknowledged that for the interpretive researcher, there can be no truly objective position because he or she becomes part of the research as a meaning-maker interacting with the other meaning-makers who are the participants. As an interpretive researcher, I align myself to Thomas (2010 cited in Dawadi et al., 2021) to the belief that reality consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world and I attempted to explain the subjective reasons and meanings that were behind social action. In this regard, what may be true and of essence in one social context may not be regarded as such in another

context with same participants because meanings are discerned as they are expressed within specific social contexts (Crossman, 2020; Krmac, 2022) thus I acknowledged that schools would differ in the strategies they used to achieve improved performance. Individuals, such as teachers and school management make sense of their subjective reality and attach meanings to it in accordance with their situation, experiences and understanding, hence their interpretation.

In summary, in adopting an interpretive paradigm or being an interpretivist means deriving knowledge and meanings as expressed by participants in a given social context. The data generated is therefore guided and underpinned by the values, beliefs and experiences of both the participants and researcher as they interact with the phenomenon under investigation (Marrelli, 2017; Dawadi et al., 2021). The final analysis is a subjective summation of meanings and interpretations of events as they occurred within a given context to the individuals concerned. In the case of this research, the influence of the RBM policy on strategies employed in improving learners' performance whilst also implementing the new curriculum can only be obtained and understood from the viewpoints of the teachers' interpretations and the meanings they attach to them within the context of their schools and individual experiences.

3.2.2 Qualitative Research

What people experience and how they interpret those experiences is the objective of a qualitative methodology (Patton, 2008, p. 49; Aspers & Corte, 2019; Yadav, 2022) in a research study. Huberman and Miles (2002, p. 12) maintain that qualitative research is a credible methodology in constructing meaning from the perspectives of the actors (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). In support, Maxwell (cited in Yadav, 2022) qualifies that qualitative research involves gathering and analyzing non-numerical data like text, video or audio to understand concepts, opinions or experiences of participants and this has guided my approach. Adding to that, Thanh and Thanh (2015) note that interpretivism is a research paradigm that prefers qualitative methods in data generation, therefore interpretivism is my approach and qualitative methods,

a means of generating the data. Expounding the use of a qualitative means within the interpretive paradigm, Dodgson (2017) states that interpretivist researchers seek methods that enable them to understand in depth the relationship of human beings to their environment and the part that they play in creating the social fabric of which they are a part. Crossman (2020) maintains that qualitative methods are usually supported by interpretivists because the interpretive paradigm portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and ever-changing. In the same vein, Bhandari (2020) states that qualitative research is a means of exploring and understanding the meanings individuals or groups assign to a social or human problem or phenomenon. My participants were teachers. As a result of the above, qualitative methods of data generation like semi-structured interviews, participant-observation and document reviews became the ways in which I sought to access how schools and teachers interpreted the RBM and the new curriculum in their efforts to improve the performance of their learners in the context of their schools and classroom environments.

According to Hammarberg et al. (2016) and Tomaszewski et al. (2020) qualitative methods are an approachable means of examining reality because as Maxwell (cited in Yadav, 2022) asserts, they often give rich reports that are necessary to fully understand contexts. Hammarberg et al. (2016) explain that the reason why qualitative data is rich and in-depth is because researchers often capture data through the process of deep attentiveness and empathetic understanding as participant observers (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). Crossman (2020) and Bhandari (2020) confirm that researchers use qualitative approaches to explore the behaviours, perspectives, feelings and experiences of people and unpack what lies at the core of their lives. It therefore follows that qualitative methods give rich data through interviews and participant observations, hence the choice of their use in this current research.

Elaborating on context and participant experience, Dodgson (2017) reiterates that qualitative research is characteristically carried out in naturalistic settings with researchers asking broad

questions designed to explore, interpret or understand the social context. For example, in this study I asked questions such as; what are your views regarding results based management and the new curriculum? How has the results management and the new curriculum motivated you in the implementation process? What measures or strategies or efforts has the school introduced and/or adapted to meet the expectations? The data generation techniques included observations and interviews that brought the researcher in close contact with participants who were selected on the basis of them having information vital to the questions being asked. I also used these tools to gather data and meanings from head teachers and teachers in the context of their schools.

Ryan (2018) and Crossman (2020) concur that researchers doing qualitative inquiry turn to human participants for guidance, control and direction throughout the research and at the same time, researchers must take into account their own position in the settings and situation as they cannot be divorced from the phenomenon under study. In this study my positionality had some influence as I, the researcher, am from an education background, so I sought data from experienced school heads and teachers on the strategies of raising performance against the backdrop of RBM and on the implementation of the new curriculum as they would be rich data sources. In support of this assertion, Hammarberg et al. (2016, p. 448) note that qualitative research aims at exploring and at discovering issues about the problem or phenomenon at hand through an interpretive, naturalistic approach so as to make sense of or interpret the phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. To achieve this, Dodgson (2017, p. 355) explains that qualitative research therefore employs different knowledge claims, enquiry strategies, data generation methods and analysis. Adding to the discourse on data generation methods, Bhandari (2020) points out that the qualitative data sources include observation, interviews and questioning, documents and texts and the researcher's impressions and reactions. In addition, Crossman (2020) and Yadav (2022) acknowledge that written

descriptions of people, events, opinions, attitudes and environments or combinations of these can also be sources of data. However, for the purpose of this research, only classroom observation, document reviews and interviews were used as data generation instruments to make sense of the phenomena through the meanings participants which proffered.

In acknowledgement of the pivotal role of the researcher, Ryan (2018) and Aspers and Corte (2019) remind us that in qualitative studies, the researcher is considered the primary instrument of data collection and analysis as he or she engages the situation, making sense of the multiple interpretations from multiple realities that exist in any given social contexts. This means that qualitative research produces results which are an interpretation by the researcher's filtered views. For these reasons, this study has employed semi-structured interviews, observation and document analysis as data generation methods in an effort to establish the strategies employed by schools and teachers to raise performance and implement the new curriculum.

In rationalising the qualitative study, Hammarberg et al. (2016) and Tomaszewski et al. (2020) argue that it is generally recognised that qualitative researchers are more concerned with processes rather than the outcomes or products. As such, Hammarberg et al. (2016, p. 449) contend that when the understanding of an event is a function of personal interaction and perception of those in that event and the descriptions of the processes that characterise the event. Qualitative approaches are therefore more appropriate to provide the insight necessary to understand the participants' role in the event and their perceptions of the experience. Maxwell (2008, p. 47 in Aspers & Corte, 2019) lists the following five purposes for which qualitative studies are useful:

1. Understanding the meanings which the participants in the study give to events, situations and actions where they are involved and the accounts they give of their lives and experiences. In this study teachers gave their opinions and experiences on implementing RBM and the new

curriculum.

2. Understanding the particular context within which the participants act and the influence this context has on their actions. In this study the researcher went to each school and individual classrooms to understand the participants' context. Being a teacher herself, also helped.
3. Identifying unanticipated phenomena and influences and generating new grounded theories about them. In this study the use of interviews and the confidentiality of the process enabled the participants to volunteer information which generated new grounded theories.
4. Understanding the process by which events and actions take place and
5. Developing casual explanations. In this study the researcher was also a participant observer engaging on the implementation of RBM and new curriculum which enabled the understanding of the processes involved.

Morehouse (2011, p. 66), Aspers and Corte (2019) and Tomaszewski et al. (2020) also gave a similar summary of characteristics of qualitative approaches which are of benefit to this study:

1. Qualitative data allows theoretical frameworks not to be predetermined but to be derived directly from the data. The interaction between the researcher and the participants leads to the generation of concepts which in turn generate new theoretical ideas. It also helps modify existing theories or uncover the essence of the phenomena. The interaction between this researcher and the participants led to the generation of strategies concepts like holiday camps, extra lessons and morning work.
2. Qualitative research is context-bound and researchers must be context sensitive by immersing themselves in everyday real-life settings and situations. The contexts of the participants' lives or work affect their behaviour and are therefore grounded in their history and temporality (Yadav, 2022). Understanding the context enables the researcher to locate the actions and perceptions of individuals and grasp the meanings they communicate (Krmac, 2022). In a

broader sense the context includes the economic, political and cultural frameworks. In this study, the researcher spent hours in schools and classrooms as a participant observer interacting with participants in their context, noting down the influence of the said context, their experiences, economic and cultural frameworks on their understanding of the RBM policy and the new curriculum implementation mandate.

3. Qualitative researchers focus on the emic perspective, that is, the views of the people involved in the research, their perceptions, meanings and interpretations. The premise here is that individuals are best placed to describe situations and feelings in their own words. The participants are empowered in that they do not merely react to the questions but have a voice and guide the study; hence they are informants rather than subjects (Aspers & Corte, 2019). This researcher accessed varied views, perceptions and interpretations of the RBM and the new curriculum implementation policy and how these policies influenced their strategies to improve learners' performances and implement the new curriculum syllabi.
4. Qualitative researchers use thick descriptions that include detailed portrayals of the participants' experiences, going beyond a report of surface phenomena to their interpretations, uncovering feelings and meanings of their actions. Thick descriptions help the researchers to share knowledge with the readers of the study, sharing the construction of reality and coming to similar conclusions in the analysis of the research (Yadav, 2022). Qualitative researchers are story-tellers, although the data generation are systematic and develop logically, researchers' present feelings and discussions in the form of a story with a distinct storyline (Krmac, 2022). This researcher used the undiluted opinions, perceptions, feelings, interpretations and meanings of the participants with regards to the RBM and new curriculum implementation policies to inform the findings, recommendations and theorizations of this study.
5. The relationship between the researcher and the participants is close and based on the position of equality as human beings. In this particular study it is based on some shared experiences as

teachers in some similar contexts.

6. Data generation and data analysis generally proceed together and in some forms of qualitative research they interact. In this research they did proceed together as data generation provided concepts, patterns and themes for thematic analysis thereafter.

3.2.4 The qualitative research design & the style of a case study

The fundamental role of qualitative research designs in the mold of case studies is argued for by a number of scholars, including Denzin and Lincoln (2009 in Harrison et al., 2017), who argue that human learning is best researched using a qualitative design. Harrison et al., (2017) explain that a research design can be thought of as the logic or master plan of a research study that throws light on how the study was conducted, that shows how all the major parts of the research study, that is, the sample or groups, measures, treatments or interventions worked together in an attempt to address the research questions. Tetnowski (2019, p. 35) condenses the research design as the actualisation of logic in a set of procedures that optimizes the validity of data for a given research problem. Yin (2003 in Harrison et al., 2017) succinctly explains that a research design is an action plan for getting from here to there, where the 'here' may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered and the 'there' as some sets of answers or conclusions.

Drawing from the qualitative research designs discourse, McCombes (2020) argues that the most typical application of qualitative research seems to be that of case studies. Given the interpretive stance adopted in this research and the nature of the research questions, the case study design was considered the most appropriate to employ because of its advantages in revealing in detail the perceptions and concerns of individual participants in a real-world setting. It is for these reasons that the researcher sampled or selected three Kwekwe urban district schools with varying performance levels as her case studies to generate data on the strategies used to improve the learners' performance against the backdrop of the RBM, the strategies employed to implement the new curriculum and teachers' perceptions, concerns and

understanding of the RBM and the new curriculum policies. Arguing for the case study design, Tetnowski (2019) recommends a case study is one of several ways of doing research whether it is social science related or even socially related because it aims at understanding human beings in a social context by interpreting their actions as a single group or community or a single event. The promotion of the case study in qualitative research therefore leads to its definition by Yin (2003 in Harrison et al. 2017, p. 3) who defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined. Similarly, Ritchie and Lewis (cited in Harrison et al., 2017, p. 4) view the primary defining features of a case study as being the multiplicity of perspectives which are rooted in specific contexts. From these definitions, it can be deduced that case studies examine current phenomena in given contexts to gain many meanings and interpretations of participants directly involved with and experiencing that particular phenomenon within certain parameters. In this study a multi-site case study was used to provide multiple perspectives from schools and teachers who were in three distinct academic performance categories. Given the interpretive position of this study, the nature of the phenomenon in discussion and research questions, the case study was a design of choice because it provided a systematic way of generating and analysing the data as well as reporting the results of three specific schools.

It therefore followed that the research design for this study was a case study. I selected three case study schools to provide data on what strategies were in place for good results and how to implement the new curriculum. A case study is a suitable qualitative inquiry method that identifies and describes practices, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, opinions, feelings and knowledge (McCombes, 2020; Paparini et al., 2020). The use of a case study enables the researcher to gain an understanding of those experiences as the participants express the meanings of their reality Yin (cited in Paparini et al., 2020). The researcher chose the case

study design because the research sought to find out how schools and teachers achieved or improved on their previous results. Baxter and Jack (cited in Harrison et al., 2017, p. 4) point out that rigorous qualitative case studies afford researchers an opportunity to explore or describe the phenomenon in context using a variety of data sources and it specifically answers the how and why questions. Since the research is located in interpretivism, the intention was to access data from individual teachers and school management in the selected schools. At the end of the research, adequate data (data saturation) was gathered which helped to construct insights into schools achieving good results at the same time that they were implementing a new curriculum.

The tendency of social activities in case studies to produce varied meanings has been validated by Yin (cited in Paparini et al., 2020) who observed that an exploratory case study is used to explore those situations in which intervention being evaluated has no clear single set of outcomes. The researcher expected to find a myriad of cause-effect factors to good results and implementing a new curriculum, some already expounded on in literature review and some hopefully outside the box. In the same line of thought, Stake (cited in Tetnowski, 2019) termed this type of case study 'instrumental' in the sense that the researcher aims to gain insight and understanding of a particular situation and phenomenon. As a practicing teacher, the researcher had an interest in the production of good results and implementation of the new curriculum, especially the methodologies used to achieve that result.

3.2.5 Research Instruments

The case study research design comes with a multitude of research instruments to generate data. Runeson and Host (cited in Marrelli, 2017; Buntins et al., 2021) state that ethnographic methods like interviews and observations are most likely used for data generation in case studies. Marshall and Rossman (cited in Rashid et al., 2019) add that the correct research tools are important in conducting efficient research and these include participating in the setting,

observing directly, interviewing in depth and analysing documents and materials. Drawing from these observations, the researcher chose to use interviews, observations and document analysis on strategies of improving learners' performance in gathering data on what teachers in schools were doing to achieve improved or good results. The use of the three types of research instruments are aligned with Yin (cited in Paparini et al., 2020)'s promotion of case studies' use of multiple data sources as the hallmark in enhancing data credibility. The multiple data generation instruments and a variety of data sources facilitates data saturation, cross checking and triangulation of data within a case (Patton 2002 cited in Rashid et al., 2019). For example what was gathered from the interviews was verified by document observation of pass rate schedules and scheme plans. Elaborating on the tools associated with a case study design, McCombes (2020) points out that the case study makes use of multiple methods of data generating such as interviews, documented reviews, archival records and direct and participant observation which produce thick descriptions of the phenomenon. Tetnowski (2019) explains that such thick descriptions give the researcher access to the multiple interpretations of the phenomenon. Qualitative researchers like me describe, analyse and interpret data. On that note, this study also made use of interviews; documented reviews on performance improving strategies, archival records on pass rate schedules and participant observation as data generation methods to obtain detailed descriptions and explanations of the strategies of implementing the new curriculum and improving learners' performance from teachers in the context of their schools and working environments. In finding out what schools and teachers were doing to get the desired performance, the researcher interviewed school heads and teachers in three different schools, observed teaching situations and observed documents such as scheme plans for methods and mark schedules for results. Table 3.1 below captures each data generation tool and its use in the study.

Table 3.1: Study Data

Data Tool	REASON FOR USE	DATA SOURCE	NO. OF SOURCES
Semi structured interview	To gather opinions and experiences on RBM and new curriculum , performance improving strategies and implementation	School heads	3
		teachers	18
Observations	To cross check and observe strategies for improving learners' performance and for implementing the new curriculum	Lessons	18
Document analysis	To access the impact of performance improvement and new curriculum intervention strategies	Pass rate schedules 2014-16	3 per school=9
		Scheme plan evaluations	18

3.2.5.1 Interviews

Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences (McNamara cited in Quad, 2016; Sathiyaseelan, 2020). This definition resonated with what was intended to besought – what really happened behind the closed gates and doors of schools and classrooms to produce the required results. Amongst the types of interviews, Velenzuela and Shrivastava (cited in Quad, 2016) list the general interview guide approach and the standardized, open ended interview. The general guide approach ensures that the same general

areas of information are gathered from each interviewee (like the qualification and years of experience of teachers in all the three schools) but still allows a degree of freedom and adaptability in getting the information from the interviewee. As schools and teachers operated in different settings and individual teachers' experiences were likely to differ, this type of interviewing did resonate with the research. In agreement, Adosi (2020) contends that the standardised, open- ended interview allows the same semi-structured with largely open-ended questions to be asked to all interviewees and this facilitates faster in depth interviews. Although there were three schools in the research, the aim was the same – what were they doing to achieve improved or good results and what was their motivation.

Cohen et al. (2018) view interviews as methods of gathering data or information through an oral quiz using a set of pre-planned core questions. Adosi (2020) further explains that interviews can be very productive since the interviewer can pursue specific issues of concern that may lead to focused and constructive suggestions. The interview has been used extensively in this study because of its qualities of addressing the research questions directly and allowing the researcher close contact with participants to probe further the meanings and interpretations of the phenomena at hand. For instance, the interviews were used to establish opinions, perceptions and interpretations on the RBM and new curriculum implementation policies and how these influenced the strategies they used. The concerns raised informed the recommendations on the RBM and new curriculum implementation. Earlier, Bell and Waters (cited in Sathiyaseelan, 2020) had a similar view point when they posited that the main advantages of interview method of data gathering are:

i. A direct contact with the users often leads to specific and constructive suggestions.
ii. T h e y are good at obtaining detailed information
iii. Few participants are needed to gather rich and detailed data.

The interpretive position, the nature of the research questions and the aim of this research called for interviews as the main data generation instruments for the reasons given above and that the researcher was also a participant observer, allowing for more detailed discussions on the issues at hand.

Depending on the need and design, interviews can be unstructured, structured and semi-structured with individuals or focus groups (Adosi, 2020; Sathiyaseelan, 2020). The case study design and the nature of the research questions in this study called for a semi-structured interview questions on the RBM and new curriculum implementation policies and the strategies of raising performance and implementing the new curriculum. As a result, the semi-structured interview approach on individual teachers concerned was adopted as the modus operandi. According to Creswell and Poth (cited in Astroph & Chung, 2018) the semi-structured interview uses both closed and open questions and therefore has the advantages of consistency with all the participants as it affords a set of pre-planned core questions for guidance such that the same areas are covered with each interviewee. This augured well with the objectives of this study hence the use of the semi-structured interview. As the interviews progressed, interviewees were given an opportunity to elaborate or give more detailed information on issues raised.

In support of interviews allowing for probes and detailed information, Cohen et al. (2018) assert that semi-structured interviews involve numerous crucial questions that make it easier to discover the parts that give meaning to the research and allows the researcher to get interviewees to explain a response more thoroughly. The authors also note that there is flexibility in semi-structured interviews allowing for the detailing of data that is valuable to the participants but may not have been considered beforehand as relevant by the researcher. This established what schools and teachers did to produce improved good results, for instance if there were strategies which were unique/ novel and not mainstream. The researcher spent 30-

45 minutes interviewing and discussing RBM and performance improving strategies with each grade 7 teacher. Questions like: What is your understanding of RBM? What strategies are you using to improve your class performance? The same unfolded with each grade 3 teachers on new curriculum and implementation strategies. The 3 head teachers in the 3 participating schools were also interviewed on both RBM and new curriculum implementation. The use of semi-structured, open – ended interviewing allowed the participants, from management to individual teachers, to volunteer their experiences particular to their situations. For example questions like; what is your understanding of RBM and new curriculum? What would you suggest as the best way to improve learners' performance and implement the new curriculum? Adosi (2020) summarises semi-structured interviews succinctly by noting that although the semi-structured guide provides a clear set of instructions for interviewers and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data, the interviewer is also able to follow topical trajectories in the conversation that may stray from the guide when he or she feels this is appropriate. For instance, these study participants volunteered suggestions on how best to factor in the RBM and usher in a new curriculum, issues which were not the thrust of the interview but were deemed appropriate as this helped in the recommendations chapter later.

3.2.5.2 Observations

In line with qualitative case study, observations of in-class teaching situations, twelve classes were observed in this research to gain data on performance improvement strategies in use and new curriculum implementation strategies. Mckechnie (2008, p. 573 in Busetto et al., 2020) defines observations as data generating using one's senses, looking and listening in a systematic and meaningful way. The researcher listened in classroom teaching-learning situations to gain lived experiences of strategies in use. The researcher's actions were prompted by Adosi (2020)'s poignant observations that the semi-structured interview is often preceded by

observations which allow the researcher to develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions. Adosi's analysis resonated with the researcher's next step of using observations to validate data gained from interviews. In validating the importance of observation in research, Kabir (2018) and Cohen et al. (2018) describe observation as having led to some of the most important scientific discoveries in human history. Kabir (2018) highlights that when observing people; the researcher has two choices, either participant observation or unobtrusive observation. Participant observation is a common method within ethnographic research in sociology and anthropology and the researcher may interact with participants and become part of their community (Kabir, 2018; Cohen et al., 2018). These insights augured well with the research. As a teacher, the researcher interacted with the schools' management and teachers in Kwekwe observing what they did, in real time, to achieve the expected good results. For instance, because teachers were too busy during the normal school days, the researcher used instruction time during the holidays and she spent between 30-40 minutes in each grade 7 and 3 class observing the lessons and interacting with the teacher on matters relating to the research such as their understanding of RBM and new curriculum. The strategies used to improve learners' performance and implement the new curriculum were also discussed. A total of 15 lessons were observed. Most of the grade seven holiday lessons observed during the first term April 2017 school holidays were on revision of past exam papers. Teachers were using assessment as their pedagogical approach instead of direct instruction to impart content knowledge in various learning areas. The main focus was on equipping learners with question paper interpretation and examination skills. There was no development, sequencing and progression of content knowledge according to the syllabus blue prints. Instead concepts were demonstrated and explained whenever they were encountered in the assessment. Teachers used these encounters to introduce, demonstrate and contextualize knowledge or a concept. For example, in Mr. Gumbo's class in School A, a misunderstanding on a fraction number story occurred and the

teacher took that opportunity to explain the concept of fractions. He demonstrated using pieces of writing chalk, how a whole number could be divided into halves (two equal parts) and the halves into a further two equal parts each to make altogether four quarters (four equal parts). That demonstration reflected a semblance of conceptual knowledge development and sequencing. As the researcher observed what went on in classrooms, she gained valuable indepth data which was not availed in interviews like how learners collaborated each other in solving problems in pairs or groups. How they also cross checked each other's homework and project work, correcting and adding more content knowledge in the process. The researcher discovered that learners were using collaboration as a strategy for their individual improvement.

3.2.5.3 Document Analysis

As an extension of observation, the researcher also resorted to document analysis for the verification of pass rate schedules and scheme plans for the planned intervention methods. Breyschneider et al., (2017) allude that document analysis are a qualitative data generation method resulting in evidence-based information and insight into the research question. The three schools' pass rate schedules from 2014- 2016 were reviewed to gain insight on the impact of the performance improvement strategies in use. Twenty-four scheme-plans of the classes in the study were reviewed and analysed to gain insight in the planned intervention strategies for performance improvement and new curriculum implementation strategies. This was done to fulfil the secondary data requirement in data validation. Ciesielski et al., (2018) emphasize referring to secondary data or existing data such as records, and archive documents as important to secure the most valid data related to the questions or topics of interest. For this research, reference to records of past and present passes rates schedules of the selected schools helped to validate the improvement of results from 2014-2016. An observation of individual teachers' scheme plans also validated the methods or strategies they were using to improve or maintain good results. In support, Stake (2009 cited in Ciesielski et al., 2018) contends that school

improvement plans or achievement test reports can be repositories and these documents can complement the researchers' work and other data sources. For the three schools in the study, results from 2014-2016 showed an upward performance trajectory. For example school B recorded a pass rate of 92.45% in 2014, 94.36% in 2015 and 98.23% in 2016. Data generation using the listed critical questions and data tools was collapsed into the following table:

CRITICAL QUESTIONS	REASON FOR DATA BEING COLLECTED	RESEARCH STRATEGY(Instrument)	NO. OF SOURCES
How did primary schools and teachers respond to the introduction of results based management and the new curriculum	To explore how schools and teachers responded to the introduction of results based management and the new curriculum	Semi structured interviews with school heads and teachers of the sampled 3 schools	3 school heads 9 grade 3 teachers 9 grade 7 teachers
What strategies did the schools and teachers put in place to raise learners' performance	To establish the strategies that schools and teachers put in place to raise learners' performance	Semi structured interviews Document analysis: scheme plans Lesson observations	9 Grade 3 teachers and 9 grade 7 teachers 18 18
What are the outcomes of their efforts to raise learners' performance and implement the new curriculum	To establish the outcomes of the strategies to raise learners' performance and implement the new curriculum	Grade 7 pass rate schedules (2014-16) Grade 3 scheme plans for new curriculum implementation	3 (one per school) 9

Table 3.2: Study's Research Design

3.2.8 Validity through Triangulation

According to Noble and Heale (2019) triangulation in social research involves the use of multiple methods and measures of an empirical phenomenon in order to overcome problems of bias and validity. Yin (cited in Hales, 2017) argues that triangulation arose from an ethical need to confirm the validity of the processes and in case studies it can be achieved through using multiple data sources. Triangulation therefore means the use of many methods of generating data to overcome issues of bias and to achieve credibility. Hales (2017) lists data sources as inclusive of literature reviews, interviews, questionnaires, participant observations, group discussions, observations, document analysis and many more. As a way of meeting triangulation demands, this research used a detailed literature review, interviews, participant observations, document reviews and observation as data generation sources in order to gather multiple perspectives on the same issues to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the primary schools' efforts to raise learners' performance against the backdrop of RBM and new curriculum implementation policies.

In furthering the triangulation discourse, Noble and Heale (2019) concur that triangulation is used to compare data to decide if it corroborates the data and hence to validate research findings. It is therefore one of the most important ways of improving the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings. In establishing strategies employed by teachers to raise performance and implement the new curriculum the researcher made an elaborate effort in the literature review to enumerate the various strategies used by others in similar situations worldwide, the challenges they met and the best ways/ methods they forged/ developed to achieve their goals. During data presentation and analysis a comparison was made with what emerged from the research to the views evident in the literature review. In a way, this was aimed to effect triangulation into practice and hence validate the research findings. For instance, data from literature review indicated that schools with quality strategic teachers in their employ had a proven success records in implementing performance strategies and innovations. This was also evidenced by the three schools in the study who had qualified, experienced teachers manning the examination and new curriculum classes.

Denzin and Lincoln (cited in Heale & Forbes, 2020) describe triangulation as crystallisation which means the researcher tells the same story through the data gathered from different sources. The process of crystallisation involves immersion; a process whereby researchers immerse themselves in the data that they have gathered by reading or examining data from different data sources in order to reflect on the analysis experience and attempt to identify and articulate patterns or themes that emerge (Sathiyaseelan, 2020; Buntins et al., 2021). The crystallisation process resonated with this research because of its interpretive nature as the researcher immersed herself in the data she gathered in an effort to find meanings, themes and patterns for interpretation from all the available data. For this study, reasons for and against the RBM and new curriculum, effective performance improvement and new curriculum implementation strategies emerged.

Advancing an argument for triangulation, Silverman (2010 cited in Hales, 2017) singles out methodological triangulation in particular. This is adopting different strategies but staying within a single paradigm such as using participant observation and interviews together in one qualitative study to confirm the findings generated through more than one method in an effort to attain validity and to add depth to the findings (Heale and Forbes, 2020; Paparini et al., 2020). Given the interpretive stance and the case study design approach used in this research, methodical triangulation was used as findings were validated by multiple methods: participant observation, interviews and document reviews as methods of data gathering.

3.3 Sampling selection

In establishing what schools and teachers were doing to improve or maintain good results against the expectations of the RBM and the new curriculum, three schools were selected within the Kwekwe urban schools' community, where the researcher practiced as a teacher due to convenience. The selected schools presented varying cases. School C was not recognised in terms of results initially, however, at the onset of the RBM, there has been a steady improvement in results and it is now a school associated with good results, hence its inclusion in the study. School B initially

had good results but after the RBM, the school's academic results soared, to the extent that it was at the top of the performance listing of all urban schools at the time of the study in 2017.

School A always performed well and has continued to hold and maintain that ranking. From these selections, it can be deduced that the researcher used what Given (2008, p.10 in Palinkas et al, 2018) describes as the maximum variation category of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is concerned with what the researcher wants to accomplish, know and from where (Given 2008, p.10). For this research, I wanted to ascertain how schools were producing the expected results. This comprised the rationale for the school selection as acknowledged by Crossman (2020) who explains that maximum variation sampling as one of the strategies under purposive sampling which include both extreme and typical cases of the phenomenon one is studying. Hence school A went from average results to good results, School B went from good results to better results and School C maintained their good results. This, however, was not a comparative case study. Flick (cited in Palinkas et al., 2018) asserts that in any case study research, the selection of an appropriate case is crucial, specific boundaries are provided for the case study by determining who is to be studied and in what settings. Participants are purposively selected in order to ensure the quality of data generated (Crossman, 2020). The research participants were the 3 Heads of schools and 18 teachers (Grade 7and3), giving a total of 21 participants. Grade seven learners write the national examination that determines the schools' pass rate. Grade threes were the first phase of the new curriculum implementation, hence their inclusion. The number of teachers was determined by the number of grade 7&3 classes in the 3 selected schools. For instance, school A has 8 classes, school B has 6 classes and school C has 4 classes, therefore giving a total of 18 teachers.

3.3.1 Theoretical sampling justification

The rationale on the sampling criterion in qualitative research is an important aspect which warrants justification as the sample defines the patterns, themes and meanings that emerge from data generation. According to Mason (cited in Palinkas et al., 2018) in agreement with Baker and

Edwards (2016) the guiding principle in meaningful qualitative sampling is the concept of saturation. Saturation in qualitative research that uses a case study design and interviews as the main instrument of data generation implies that there is a point of diminishing returns, that is, larger samples with more data do not necessarily lead to more information but the same repetitive information. The authors argue that qualitative research seeks to uncover diverse opinions from the sample size and one person's opinion is enough to generate a code which is part of the analysis framework. Zimbabwean primary schools are generally perceived as homogeneous and the teachers usually follow similar guiding principles and strategies in teaching (Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016-2020) which meant that using a smaller sample would actually yield the required rich data, which is data saturation.

Baker and Edwards (2016) contend that while saturation is ideal, some research experts give numerical guidance. For instance, based on studies in academia, 30 participants are an ideal sample size but studies can have as little as 10 participants for the most comprehensive view (Mason, 2010, p. 14). Mason (cited in Palinkas et al., 2018) further argues that because qualitative research is very labour intensive, analysing a large sample can be time consuming and it is often not practical. This was the case with this study, as the researcher was an employee, with limited time at her disposal. Finally, Baker and Edwards (2016) emphasize that in qualitative research, in order to decide on the sample size, the researcher must interrogate the purpose of their study, the study design and instruments, the budget and resources available. This study aimed to establish the best strategies in achieving good academic results based on the case of 3 schools, 21 participants interviewed, 10 lessons were observed and 15 documents being analysed. Therefore, the sample size of 3 schools and 21 participants, according to both Mason (2010) and Baker and Edwards (2016) was ideal.

3.3.2 Other questions of validity, reliability, trustworthiness and credibility

These issues have been categorically raised and discussed under the sub-headings of the research instruments. Therefore briefly, Given's (2008 in Palinkas et al., 2019) maximum variation sampling gives and assures credibility of the data gathered. Flick (2009) in Palinkas et al. (2019) adds that the specific boundaries provided for by the case study of determining who is to be studied and in what settings also assures validity and credibility. Since this study employed semi-structured interview questions, lesson observations, document and results schedules' analysis of the 21 targeted participants from 3 varying schools as data gathering instruments, it inevitably justifies and addresses the issues of validity, reliability and credibility in numerous ways. The use of multiple data generation instruments in a case study like this one has been hailed by Yin (cited in Heale & Forbes, 2020) as the hallmark in enhancing data credibility. Also, Calzon (2021) claims that the traditional criteria for ensuring the credibility of research data such as objectivity, reliability and validity are used in scientific and experimental studies because they are often based on standardised instruments. However, qualitative studies are not based upon standardised instruments and often utilise non-random samples, therefore these evaluation criteria cannot be strictly applied to a qualitative paradigm, particularly when the researcher is more interested in questioning and understanding the meaning and interpretation of phenomena. Therefore, based on Calzon's claims, the interpretive stance of this qualitative research hinged on a purposive sample of three schools and about twenty participants' understandings, meanings and interpretations in their contextual settings which has been validated by non-standardised criteria such as subjectivity.

Furthermore, Calzon (2021) points out that trustworthiness is the term in qualitative research that measures the quality of research, the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable and trustworthy. Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p. 469 in Harrison et al., 2017) concur with Creswell (2014) in suggesting that trustworthiness in qualitative research can be established by using the following four strategies:

1. Credibility: Credibility in qualitative research is defined as the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable, trustworthy and analogous to internal validity, that is, how research findings match reality (Aspers and Corte, 2019; Dawadi et al., 2021). However, according to the philosophy underpinning interpretive qualitative research, reality is relative to meanings and interpretations that people construct within social contexts (Pulla and Carter, 2018). Silverman (2010) and Dawadi et al. (2021) suggests that to counteract this fact there should be an inclusion of member-checking into the findings that is, gaining feedback on the data, interpretations and conclusions from the participants themselves as a method of increasing credibility. In this study, credibility was achieved by matching research findings with reality in that participants proffered interpretations and meanings to the RBM and new curriculum implementation policies in their context and lived experiences, and these informed the findings and recommendations.

2. Transferability: Research findings are transferable or generalizable only if they fit into new contexts outside the actual study context (Calzon, 2021). Creswell (2014) explains generalisability as the extent to which findings can be generalised, that is, the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times or settings than those directly studied. Calzon (2021) argues that transferability is considered a major challenge in qualitative research due to the subjectivity of the participants and the researcher as the key instrument. However, the thick descriptions which detail the research methods, contexts and assumptions or rationales underlying the study which speak for themselves enables readers to appraise the significance of the meanings attached to the findings and make their own judgements regarding the transferability of the research outcomes (Silverman, 2010; Pulla and Carter, 2018; Yadav, 2022). For this study, the research findings can be transferred or generalized to the rest of Kwekwe urban district if they have similar contexts

to the three schools which participated in the study.

3. Dependability. According to Merriam (2010 cited in Bhat, 2019) dependability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated with similar subjects in a similar context, it emphasises the importance of the researcher accounting for or describing the changing contexts and circumstances that are fundamental to consistency of the research outcome. Calzon (2021) compares dependability to reliability, which in qualitative studies is practically impossible as human behaviour is not static but highly contextual and changes continually depending on various influencing factors like the multiple interpretations of reality by the study participants, a similar study with different participants in a different institution with different organisational culture and context or by a different researcher may not necessarily yield the same results. However, Merriam (2010 cited in Bhat, 2019) suggests that reliability in qualitative research should be determined by whether the results are consistent with the data gathered and this can be achieved by explaining the assumptions and theories behind the study, using multiple data generation methods and analysis, that is, and triangulation. Crossman (2020) adds that dependability can be achieved through auditing which requires that data and descriptions of the research be elaborate and rich. In this study, it has been assumed that dependability was achieved by infusing depth in the data generation with different schools and participants within the Kwekwe urban district.

4. Confirmability of findings. This refers to the degree to which the research findings can be confirmed or corroborated by others. Thomas (cited in Quad, 2016) compares confirmability to objectivity, that is, the extent to which the researcher is aware of or accounts for individual subjectivity or bias. Crossman (2020) and Yadav (2022) again argue that auditing could also be used to establish confirmability in which the researcher makes the provision of a methodological account of how the research was done and archives all collected data in a retrievable form so that it can be made available if the findings are challenged. In this study,

the researcher made efforts to account for how the research was done by archiving and appending all letters of clearance from gatekeepers and signed consent forms from participants.

The researcher employed efforts to meet the demands of trustworthiness as detailed in the discussion above to achieve credibility and validity of the study. Finally, Patton (cited in Rashid et al., 2019) also agrees that multiple data instruments on a variety of data sources facilitates cross checking or triangulation of data within a case study as was done in this study. Inevitably the questions of validity, reliability and credibility have been duly addressed in this study.

3.4 Ethics and Confidentiality

This research involved public institutions or schools as research participants. Information or data on the ratings of these schools is public knowledge and these are made annually at district prize giving ceremonies. For the heads and teachers of the selected schools, clearance from the Ministry‘s various gatekeepers to conduct the research in the said schools was obtained. Consent from the individual heads and teachers who participated in the research were also obtained. According to the Ethics and Confidentiality principles as enunciated by Fritz (2008, p. 45 in Hill, 2020), among other issues, doing no harm to the people, organisations or communities who participate, getting informed consent and maintaining the privacy or confidentiality of people and organisations participating in the research are some of the major points of ethics. These principles of ethics resonated with the research as no harm was intended and the schools and teachers were given pseudonyms so as not to identify them.

This being a qualitative study the researcher had to interact deeply with the participants thus entering their personal domain of values, opinions and experiences to gather the data. This was done during the April schools holidays in 2017 after obtaining clearance from relevant gate keepers. Silverman (2010) and Sathiyaseelan (2020) remind and researchers that they should

always remember that while they are doing their research, they are entering the private space of their participants; therefore, understandably this raises several ethical issues that should be addressed during and after the research has been conducted. Concurring, Creswell (2014) states that the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the participants. This researcher assured the participants about the confidentiality of the process and adhered to their times of consultation. Miles and Huberman (in Crossman (2020) list and caution researchers to be aware of the following considerations before, during and after the research has been conducted:

a, informed consent

b, harm and risk

c, honesty and trust (truthfulness in presenting data), privacy, confidentiality and anonymity.

One of the unexpected concerns relating to ethical issues is the cultural sensitivity. Silverman (cited in Aspers and Corte 2019) argues that the relationship between the researcher and participant during an interview needs to be considered in terms of the cultural norms and values. Appropriate steps were taken in this research to adhere to the strict ethical guidelines in an effort to uphold participants' privacy, confidentiality, dignity, rights, anonymity, cultural values and norms. This was done through explaining their rights to choose to participate or not before signing the consent form, the use of alphabets in place of their names and that of their schools for confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher also respected their private space by interviewing and interacting with the participants only when they indicated they were ready and respected their opinions and contributions by reporting them verbatim. The cultural norms and values were not an issue because the researcher is from a similar culture, therefore conversant in the contextual norms and values. These issues were also addressed in the UKZN ethical clearance form.

The main aim of this research was to gain knowledge on what schools and teachers did to produce good results as well as implement the new curriculum and these strategies could be shared in education circles to improve the quality of instruction.

The participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time they wished to do so. This was explained to them and indicated in writing in the individual consent forms which the participants read and acknowledged and signed in the presence of the researcher in case they needed further elaboration in issues of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy.

3.5 Data analysis approach

From the case studies of the three schools, massive amounts of data in text were accumulated. Patton (2002, p. 49 in Tomaszewski et al., 2020) alludes that qualitative analysis transforms data into findings but no formula exists for that transformation. The researcher therefore treated each school as an entity. Each school brought up its contextual meanings because the meaning of the text is negotiated among a community of interpreters. The meanings also depend on the extent that the same agreement is reached on a particular place and time based on consensual validation (Saldana, 2013, p. 235). This is because qualitative data analysts seek to describe their textual data in ways that capture the setting or people who produce this text on their own terms (Rashid et al., 2019, p. 341). Implicit here is the notion that as the researcher documented, organised and connected data during the fieldwork, she was conscious of the interpretation the participants held, then tried to make sense of it all. Patton (2002, p. 50 in Tomaszewski et al., 2020) concurs that the aim of data analysis is to make sense of the data by reducing it into manageable, intelligent pieces of information that communicate the essence of that data. Briefly, content analysis, is explained by Patton (2002, p. 50) as data reduction and sense making. The researcher reduced and made sense of the volumes of data by collapsing them into themes, for example, anti/for RBM/new curriculum views, crafting a checklist on performance improvement and detailing new curriculum implementation strategies.

3.5.1 Data Analysis: Thematic Content Analysis

Data analysis is the most important part of qualitative research as it determines and defines the meanings that inform the research findings. With that in mind, Bryman and Bell (2017) draw attention to the fact that the starting point for most forms of data analysis is the coding of gathered data. Coding implies that the coded data will not be presented in the original format but will be re- presented by the researcher (Bryman and Bell 2017, p.336). The researcher coded data gathered from interviews, documents and observations. Data has therefore been re-presented in coded themes and labels commensurate with the research questions and topic. Some of the information, such as the participants' responses to interview questions was retained as is as support for the analysis claims made. Miles et al. (2013) and Liu and Panagiotakos (2022) agree that the analytical process involves decision making by the researcher as to which chunks of data to be coded and which should be retained as is and what codes or category labels to be used to best summarise a number of chunks. It is in this line of thinking that most of the data has been coded under the given sub-headings and themes exemplified earlier, which enabled the researcher to condense it into meaningful concepts for analysis. Miles et al. (2013, p. 12) contend that condensing refers to the process of "selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and /or transforming the data that appear in the full corpus (body) of written up field notes, interviews transcripts, documents and other empirical materials." In support, Bryman and Bell (2017, p. 338) summarily point out that "codes should not be thought of purely as mechanisms or fragment to retrieve text and manage data but as a means to map the general or formal properties of concepts that are being developed." For this research these concepts are the views to RBM, the new curriculum and the strategies to raise performance and implement the new curriculum.

The data analysis method for the nature of this research was thematic content analysis. A thematic analysis is helpful in identifying and coding strategies used by schools and teachers

to raise performance and implement the new curriculum. Bryman and Bell (2016, p. 350) describe thematic analysis as a flexible method not tied to a specific philosophical orientation, used to identify, analyse and describe patterns or themes across the data set, extending to interpreting features or aspects of the research topic. This description resonated with the efforts to establish strategies used because in so doing, themes relating to strategies emerged from the data gathered and henceforth used as codes to formulate a narrative pattern across the primary schools efforts to raise performance. Basing on the strategies used by various educational institutions worldwide to raise performance as outlined in literature review, it became necessary to match the emerging themes from data gathered with those already listed as depicted in comparison checklist table 8 (chapter 4) and an analysis done in a deductive manner. Braun and Clarke (2006 in Bhat 2019) explain the deductive or theoretical thematic analysis as a top down method informed by the researcher's theoretical framework, that is, the analysis is usually guided by themes identified in previous research on the topic.

To complement thematic analysis, content analysis was used to analyse documents such as scheme-plans, pass rate schedules and schools' mission statements to pick up themes relating to strategies used as discussed in interviews. Bryman and Bell (2017) contend that content analysis is also central to the coding themes used in the analysis of qualitative data. Hsieh and Shannon (in Bhat (2019) listed three approaches to qualitative content analysis that help to ensure that the process used to extract themes was explicit. These approaches are the conventional, directed and summative. As is usually common and expected in qualitative interactions, approaches tend to be used in combinations rather than as separate entities. The same applied to this research, the researcher found it necessary to use elements of both: a directed and conventional approach to come up with comprehensive supporting evidence from the documents to the theoretical strategies already established. This means that performance improvement strategies established in literature review were complemented by those given by

participants during interviews and confirmed in scheme-plans reviews.

The researcher has used diverse methods of displaying data which made the analytical process simpler and informative. Cohen et al. (2018) have listed a host of ideas, templates and techniques for the display of data from which the researcher made her selection. Descriptive data has been displayed in a matrix format, pie charts, graphs and checklists with corresponding analysis. This has been done because of the researcher's belief that display techniques are more informative in combinations than as separate entities. The matrix format has been explained as " a tabular format that collects and arranges data for easy viewing in one place, permits detailed analysis and sets the stage for later cross-case analysis with other comparable cases or sites"(Miles et al., 2013, p. 111). It was from the matrix format that the researcher then derived the pie charts, checklists and graphs for a holistic analytical narrative. Calzon (2021) and Dawadi et al. (2021) argue that a body of knowledge is best explained and analysed in combined methods, thus giving a semblance of a holistic narrative.

As data was gathered in field work, it was coded and categorised for example according to "Tried and Tested Strategies" and "New/ Emerging Strategies" as the researcher sought to establish what schools and teachers were doing to produce improved or good results. The researcher resorted to what Hsieh and Shannon (2005, p. 6 in Bhat, 2019) term "directed content analysis". The two authors explain that the aim of directed content analysis is to validate or extend a conceptual framework. This resonated with the research as the literature review had established the underpinning expectancy motivation theories and highlighted some tried and tested strategies schools and teachers were likely to be implementing to produce good results. As already alluded to, the gathered textual data were analysed, the researcher sorted it into already determined codes, "Tried and Tested", "New Emerging", "Innovative/novel Strategies". Data that did not fall under these codes were analysed and considered whether it needed a different code or if it was a subcategory of the predetermined codes. Hsieh and

Shannon (cited in Bhat, 2019) conclude that findings from a directed content analysis offer supporting and extending evidence to researched phenomenon and theories, which was the case in this study. For instance the reasons why teachers were against or supported the RBM and new curriculum implementation mandates were evidenced by the participants' responses and supported by literature review on why innovations and changes were either rejected or accepted. After data gathering sessions, the researcher collapsed data into 3 or 4 codes depending on themes or subheadings and presented these in tables, pie charts, checklists, and graphs format. This was meant to make it easier to derive meaning of the exact strategies employed by teachers to raise their students' performance. Data analysis was guided by the theoretical analysis framework which surmised that participants' responses, perceptions and actions were driven by their motivational states and influenced by the RBM and new curriculum knowledge, complexity and context. The findings then informed the research conclusion.

3.5.2 Construction of Themes: Results Based Management

Codes	**Sub-themes**	**Main Themes**
Good, necessary Legitimate measure Sets targets Challenges rewarding	Positive views	Supportive
Policy matter Unrealistic Impractical Context insensitive	Mixed views	Reservations
Unfair		

Uncompromising Industry oriented No consultations No piloting Results focused	Negative views	Anti

Table 3.3: RBM Themes

Performance Improvement Strategies Categories

Tried &tested	**New/ emerging**	**Innovative/ novel**
Quality teachers Reading culture Remediation Team approach Homework Revision of past Papers	Extra lessons Morning work Holiday schooling Projects & research work	Holiday camps for learners from different Schools

Table 3.4: Performance Categories

New Curriculum Implementation Themes

Codes	**Sub-themes**	**Main Theme**
Inevitability of change Policy matter Challenges Relevancy	Positivity	Supportive
Lack of preparedness Lack of knowledge, resources High teacher-pupil ratios Lack of skills, expertise	Mixed reactions	Reservations
Rationale confusion Sheer resistance conservatism	Negativity	Against

Table 3.5: New Curriculum Themes

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed, in detail, the methodological aspects of this study. The first part was the rationalisation of the interpretivist position of the study, followed by the justification of the qualitative means of data generation and the establishment of the case study as the chosen design. The qualitative case study research instruments of semi-structured interviews, participant observation, documents observations and analysis were also explained in the manner they have been used and why in this research. Issues of triangulation, sampling, ethics and confidentiality were also discussed. The data generation table was provided and the data analysis strategy was discussed. Research demands of validity, reliability, credibility and trustworthiness in qualitative research were detailed. The next chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the data gathered.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In exploring the strategies that schools and teachers developed in response to RBM to improve learners' performance or continuously produce good academic results in the grade seven National Examinations, semi-structured interviews with Heads of schools and grade seven teachers were conducted from the three sampled urban schools in urban part of Kwekwe district. The same schools and their grade three teachers were also interviewed on the double whammy of RBM and the implementation of the new curriculum introduced in schools with effect from January 2017 targeting selected grades in primary schools. Grade three was one of those grades that saw an overhaul of the old curriculum and a drastic change in the content of the learning areas (subjects). The data analysis on strategies of raising learners' performance and implementing the new curriculum by primary school teachers was guided by how both the RBM and the new curriculum motivated them to pursue strategies for improving learner performance. Implementation factors such as knowledge, complexity and context of systems and the intended changes contributed to the analysis.

4.2 Participants' views

The following is a presentation and analysis of the views expressed by the Heads of schools and teachers obtained through face-to-interviews about RBM and new curriculum:

Number of participants (n=24)

CONCEPT	SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B	SCHOOL C	TOTAL
RBM	5	4	3	12
NC	5	4	3	12
Total	10	8	6	24

Table 4.1: Number of participants

4.2.2 Views and Responses on the RBM

In an effort to establish the views and responses on the RBM approach by the school heads and grade seven teachers, the research codes used to identify the participants' professional positions are in the following table:

SCHOOL	ALL IN FAVOUR		MIXED FEELINGS		AGAINST	
	HEAD	TEACHERS	HEAD	TEACHERS	HEAD	TEACHERS
A	1	8	0	0	0	0
B	1	4	0	4	0	0
C	1	0	0	0	0	4
Total	3	12	0	4	0	4

Table 4.2: Views and responses on RBM

From the above numerical representation, it is clear that the school head and teachers in School A (High academic performance) were all in favour and supportive of RBM as a suitable tool to measure and rate the success of a school and its teachers. In School B (Average performance), it was the school head and two teachers out of three who were in support of RBM while in School C (Low academic performance) it was only the school head who was in favour of RBM. It is thus evident that teachers in low academic performing schools were less supportive of RBM when compared to the teachers from high academic performing schools who were supportive of RBM. One teacher in School B had mixed feelings while both teachers in School C were totally against the RBM. This translates into 75% of educators in support of the RBM, whilst 8.3% had reservations and 16.7% were totally opposed to itas shown by the figure 4.3 on RBM views. It appeared there was a correlation between learners' performance and school management and teachers' attitudes towards RBM. Learners' performed well in

schools where the entire staff was in support of RBM (school A). Learner performance was slightly lower where there were reservations towards RBM (school B) and the lowest where teachers were against RBM being implemented (school C).

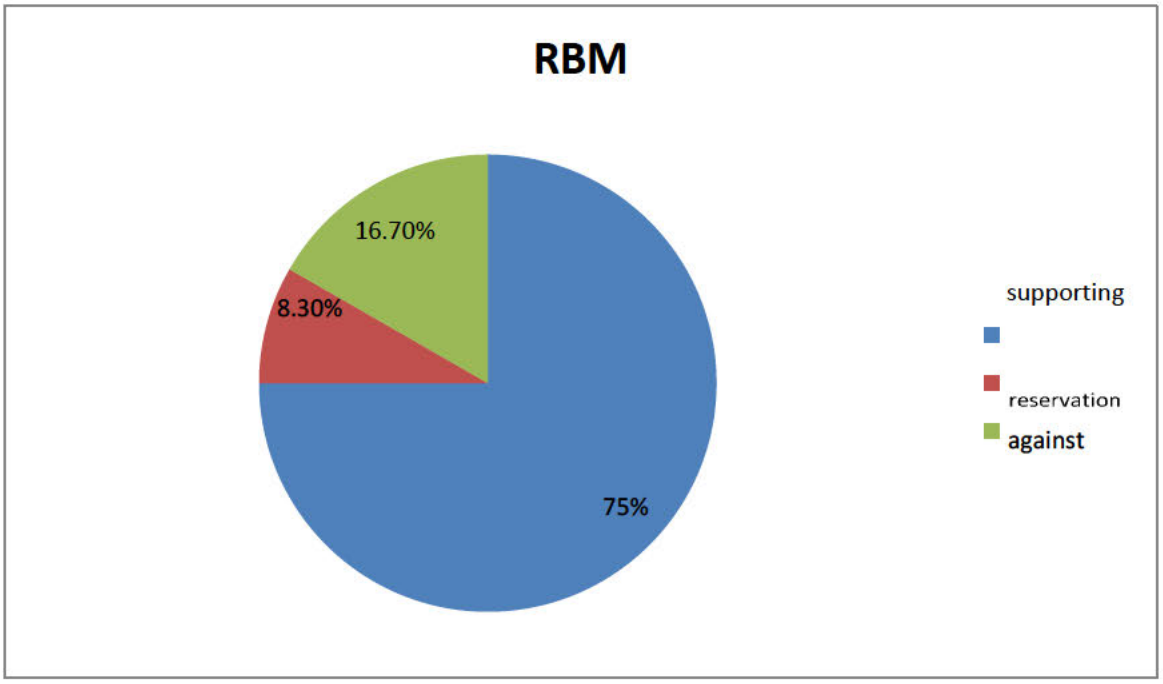

Figure 4.1: RBM Views

4.2.2.1 Professional Profiles of Participant Teachers

The table (4.3) below reflects only those participants' profiles/characteristics which had a bearing on RBM's motivation and learners' academic performance improvement strategies (Research Question 1).

Name (pseudonym)	School	Qualification	Experience (Years)	Grade Taught
Mr. Dube	A	B. ED	25	Head Teacher
Mr. Gumbo	A	Dip. ED	27	Seven (7)
Ms. Musa	A	B. ED	23	Seven
Mrs. Sayi	A	B. ED	28	Seven
Mr. Chuma	A	B. ED	21	Seven
Mr. Moyo	B	B.ED	30	Head Teacher
Mr. Mehlo	B	Dip. ED	29	Seven

Ms. Ncube	B	B. ED	20	Seven
Mr. Chioko	B	B. ED	15	Seven
Mrs. Phiri	B	Dip.ED	26	Seven
Mrs. Pasi	C	M. ED	35	Head Teacher
Mrs. Dewa	C	B. ED	30	Seven
Mr. Bango	C	B. ED	25	Seven
Total	**13**	**Supporting 75%**	**Reservations 16.7%**	**Against 8.3%**

In this study, thirteen teachers (n=13) were interviewed face-to-face individually on their views on RBM and how it motivated them to seek and implement learner improvement strategies in their classes. Grade seven teachers were singled out because of their national examination writing classes. This made their classes default faces of RBM. All primary school grades implement RBM. The professional details indicate that almost all the teachers manning the grade seven examination classes were senior experienced teachers who had been dealing with and implementing government policies and directives for along time. They also had been teaching the grade seven for decades and had been using a plethora of performance improvement strategies for a long time. These participants were in a firm position to give views on the impact of RBM on their motivational state. They also could explain what drives them to seek and apply strategies that would raise the learners' performance to the level of percentage targets set by the RBM. The outcomes of those interviews were categorized into the following themes and the analysis then follows:

Reasons for being in favor of RBM	Reasons for having reservations	Reasons for not being in Favor
Legitimacy Setting targets Pressure to improve Rewards/incentives Accepting the challenge	Unrealistic Impractical	Not acknowledging diversity Uncompromising Promotion of assessment Orientation Promotion of cheating not Teaching

Table 4.4: RBM reasons

4.2.3 Reasons Forwarded in Support of RBM

The majority (75%) of educators as represented by the school heads and teachers applauded the RBM precincts as relevant and needed in the education sector. The following were the reasons forwarded in support of RBM:

4.2.3.1 Legitimate Measure of service delivery

The educators pointed out that it was the only legitimate method to measure and make sure that service delivery in schools was taking place according to the syllabi requirements and objectives. The support of RBM has been underpinned by the expectations of the rewards of recognition, an acknowledgement and appreciation of good service delivery. This aligns with Vroom's expectancy motivation theory (discussed in chapter two). The teachers argued that in any service delivery mandate, there should be a legitimate measure to assure that service delivery will be in accordance to the principles, expectations and objectives of the subject matter in question. School heads, Mr Dube (school A), Mr Moyo (school B) and Mrs Pasi (school C) acknowledged the value of RBM and posed the following questions respectively:

How else would the ministry ascertain that things are running as they should in schools if there is no measure in place?

How would we know our performance status if there's no measure?

We cannot do without a measure of results, can we?

School heads acknowledged the importance of a credible measure of their schools' efforts to improve the performance of the learners. RBM had therefore filled that gap as a measure hence their support of it. In addition, as administrators, they represented the government view in their schools hence the show of support for ministerial directives and policies. As representatives of the government which mandated the RBM system in schools, the head teachers' show of support indicated their motivational state and excitement of a legitimate measure by which they could supervise, monitor and complement teachers' efforts in raising learners' performances.

Setting performance Targets

The teachers also pointed out that RBM set the target and as schools they were bound to meet that target and even surpass it, emphasising that RBM expectations kept both the teachers and learners on high alert to focus on targets in an effort to meet and improve performance beyond the set targets. Mr. Gumbo, a teacher from School A and Ms. Ncube respectively reiterated that:

RBM is good ---it gives me something to aim for--- for example our school targets 60% pass rate, but I make sure that I put my class target beyond the 60% to above 90%.

RBM keeps me on my toes to better my ratings and the percentage pass rate of my class.

The teachers in favour of the RBM were motivated to be pro-active in surpassing set targets to better their ratings and their learners' percentage pass rates because they were assured that in doing so, they would be rewarded. It was this motivational state that eventually pushed teachers to seek and implement performance improving strategies that assured a surpassing of set

targets. RBM in this case had set tangible targets for schools and teachers to achieve with a promise of rewards if the set targets were met. The teachers therefore felt motivated to meet the set targets with the expectancy of being rewarded. Quick (2003) and Kukulowicz (2022) noted that expectancy theory was a function of two factors, the perceived value of the reward and the expectation that certain behaviour would actually yield that reward. Therefore, when schools and teachers supported the precincts of the RBM, they envisaged those rewards as embedded in expectancy motivation theory. The rewards can be either intrinsic or extrinsic and both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards were evident. That internal satisfaction of delivering expected service, meeting set targets, the actual appreciation and acknowledgement of having done something worthwhile were the driving forces behind the teachers' support of the RBM, in addition to receiving a monetary reward.

4.2.3.3Pressure to Improve Learner Performance

A reason proffered by schools and teachers in support of the RBM ideals was its ability to pressurise and motivate them to improve student performance. Teachers claimed that they

felt put under pressure apart from being motivated by the RBM principles to improve learners' performance in order to produce credible and acceptable results. The grade seven teachers in School B acknowledged the impact of RBM on their efforts to improve learner performance. Mr. Mehlo noted:

The pressure to improve learners' performance put on us by the Head because of RBM actually motivates us to also put our learners under pressure to do better.

Mr. Chiwoko commented:

After all it's my extra pay cheque on the line here, so I am motivated to put maximum effort.

Mrs. Phiri explained:

With the writing classes we are always under pressure because we are the face of the school

in terms of results, so we try our best.

These teachers acknowledged and appreciated the impact of the RBM thrust upon them because it had motivated them to raise the otherwise average performance of their school to above average. For that reason they were now working tirelessly to maintain the status quo. The rewards offered for their efforts as highlighted by Mr. Chiwoko made their endeavors worthwhile as it translated to financial gains for the teacher but they did acknowledge that it was not always 'positive pressure' (Fullan, 2006); they were pressurized to perform. According to Isaac et al. (2001) and Gordon (2022), expectancy motivation theory encompasses aspects of Valence, Instrumentality and Expectancy in which the motivational state of an individual performing a particular task was dependent upon the linkage of these three factors. The teachers put in the effort in teaching, expecting improved performance from the learners. The improved performance was expected to yield good results or outcomes which in turn led toexpectations of monetary rewards and or recognition, appreciation and acknowledgement. Stimpson and Farquharson (2010) argued that Vroom reasoned that as long as employees believed that an increase in work effort would lead to improved performance and that this performance would lead to valued rewards, they would be motivated to achieve the desired goals. This then was one of the baseline reasons why the schools and teachers were in support of the RBM. The teachers believed that their efforts of being constantly under pressure and the resultant rewards of RBM were worth it. The head of School B, Mr. Moyo claimed that his teachers used RBM to put pressure on themselves to perform and produce even better results. He emphasized that he already had highly motivated, competent, dedicated and results oriented grade seven teachers who went beyond the call of duty to make sure that their classes achieved the best results at the end of the year.

I have very competent teachers here, who are self-starters who do not need anyone to push them. They push themselves to the limit to better their previous ratings and achieve higher

percentage pass rates for their classes. They're a very competitive lot; you find them in class way after hours and on weekends pushing their classes.

Thus, in School B, it was evident that teachers were self-motivated to improve their learners' performance in comparison to the previous year, despite the constant pressure of policy. However, it can be argued that this constant pressure to produce targeted academic results can have negative repercussions on teachers in that they maybe working 'beyond the call of duty' for financial gain, they are likely to be pursuing an instrumental goal -money more than anything intrinsic such as high academic performance by learners.

4.2.3.4 Financial Rewards, Job Security and Recommendations

Teachers supported RBM in the belief and expectation that in working hard to produce targeted results they would gain financial rewards, secure their jobs and achieve recommendations from their supervisors in the form of high rated appraisal scores to add to their curriculum resumes. Ms. Musa, a teacher in school A claimed that producing good results as expected by the RBM in her grade seven class meant securing her employment at an urban school, getting a financial incentive and an appraisal score rating of 5 out of 5 which was good for her curriculum vitae.

I was lucky to get an urban placement, so I need to work hard not to jeopardize that, plus there's an extra brown envelope for good results. When my class achieves between 80-100% pass rate, it means I also get a 5 score rating, that is good for my CV.

Similary, Mrs. Sayi, a teacher in school A added:

The appreciation we get in monetary forms and high score ratings when our classes have performed well makes us work harder to remain in grade seven classes.

As can be seen from the above comments, teachers feel rewarded because RBM is incentivized, thus high learner performance equates to high school ranking and a salary bonus.

Mr. Chiwoko from school B highlighted:

Besides high ratings, you become very popular in the community when your learners outperform others in national exams and you get recommended for extra lessons and holiday schooling, meaning more pay.

It was also evident that there were added opportunities for teachers to earn apart from the RBM bonus salary as Mr. Chiwoko indicated. Teachers would be recommended by others for additional classes and lessons during the holidays and these are paid activities.

The rewards in finances, job security and score ratings had propelled the teachers to work harder in improving their class performances. This reward system in the RBM had been one of the reasons teachers were supporting the RBM. The alignment between the teachers' efforts and their resultant rewards is evident in part by Herzberg's factors of motivation. This study also reveals additional economic rewards as well as professional and community rewards. Marcourse et al (2011) and Alshmemri et al (2017) reveal that some of these factors were hygiene factors: remuneration, job security and quality supervision. The teachers' reactions demonstrated a readiness to implement high performance strategies which in turn assured teachers of higher remuneration, securing their urban employment and it created recommendations by school heads and colleagues for extra lessons in the community.

4.2.3.5The challenge to improve learners' academic performance

The school heads and teachers in support of RBM concurred that the challenge to improve learners' performance as mandated by results management spurred them onwards to achieve high performances above the RBM set targets. As exampled and quoted earlier, teachers claimed that when they were given a school target of a 60% pass rate, they would instead pursue an 80-

90% pass rate in their individual classes (Mr. Gumbo of school A's response on setting targets). Teachers accepted the challenge to perform in anticipation of the financial rewards and job

satisfaction.

Among Herzberg's motivator factors as listed in Nickerson (2021) is employment that is challenging and stimulating, recognizing a job achieved, improving status and ensuring responsibility. As discussed in the literature review, an analysis of Herzberg's two factor motivation theory shows that when both hygiene and motivator factors are evident in a working environment, employees attempt to over achieve and respond to the policies and expectations that govern their work (Dandira et al.,2020; Nickerson, 2021). In summary, teachers in support of RBM viewed it as a motivator, propelling them to deliver better services, meet and exceed set targets, improve their learners' performance scores and accept the challenge to strive to improve learners' performance.

4.2.4 Reasons for mixed feelings/ Reservations

A minority, 8.3 % of the educators, had mixed feelings or reservations about RBM. There were numerous reasons highlighted by teachers in schools A, B and C which explained their discontent with RBM. Some of the reasons cited were:

They believed that RBM was unrealistic and impractical.

Mr. Bango a teacher from school C argued from his perspective that

RBM is not realistic, how do I improve on a child's intelligence? If a child is naturally below average, there's no way I can stretch that to say, much above average.

As can be seen in Mr. Bango's response, teachers' beliefs about children and their abilities impacted on their views.

Teachers believed that it was not realistic and practical to use RBM as a measuring tool for success or failure because they felt it was an unfair measuring tool as it did not take into consideration the varying abilities of the children, the environment in which they learnt and the

resources available in their settings. The teachers shared their views and philosophy of learners' abilities: one felt that despite the pedagogical approaches to the content, the intelligence quotient of individual learners had to be understood as impacting on the extent of their success. Once again teachers' individual beliefs about their learners' cognitive abilties influenced their view of RBM. Mrs. Dewa a teacher in school C referenced the intelligence quotient of learners and the time required for learners' growth and achieving high performance. Her response was:

RBM is not practical. We deal with human beings here not goods or raw materials that we can quickly mold. Children need to learn how to learn and that may take a life time, way after the RBM.

These comments indicate that RBM creates difficulties in the teaching and learning of children in that not all children can achieve high performance in a given time frame, academic achievements are developmental: that they are able to accomplish and reach a different level. The high teacher/pupil ratio of 1: 50 was also cited as significant in learner performance. Mrs. Phiri a teacher in school B explained that:

With such high teacher/pupil ratios it is difficult to back track for the slower learners or even to reach a respectable balance in class pass rate.

Mrs. Phiri's response reveals the negative consequences of RBM; that in pursuing for high performance, some learners with learning disabilities such as dyslexia and discalculia were not receiving needed assistance from their teachers. In this study this anomaly was exacerbated by high teacher/pupil ratio.The lack of resources was cited as having detrimental effects on learners achieving high academic performance, adding to their disenchantment with RBM. Ms. Ncube a teacher in school B commented that:

Sometimes we lack fundamental resources such as relevant textbooks, computers and the

internet to improve our learners' performance, yet we expected to perform miracles.

The reasons put forward for reservations reflect a less motivated group of teachers who were overwhelmed by the context of their schools and their beliefs about the potential of their learners to achieve high targets. To these teachers, RBM did not offer a solution to their context but it only exacerbated their situational challenges. They spoke of the short comings of RBM in use and provided suggestions: that instead of setting universal targets for all schools to achieve; it would be meaningful for targets to be determined by the individual school context. Instead it pitched school against school and teachers against each other. Some improvements in performance went unacknowledged: an improvement from a 30% class pass rate to a 51% pass rate should warrant recognition although it fell short on the RBM rewarding schedule. It was not by coincidence that teachers with reservations were mostly from schools B and C- schools with average and below average performance percentages. Their challenges made them less eager to embrace RBM, the knowledge that their efforts in raising their learners' performance would likely not meet the expected RBM thresholds, therefore there are no rewards for them. This approach to RBM might also impact negatively in the pursuit of performance improving strategies. These teachers felt that while RBM was good in principle, it would be considerate to waive RBM expectations on good results in all learning areas (subjects) because learners do have variable strengths and weaknesses: they believed that some may not be intellectually endowed in certain learning areas. This was the reason for the fluctuating class rates year after year, sometimes as high as 100% and sometimes as low as

65%. Addressing challenges in implementing the RBM, Gutuza (2016), did point out that one of the challenges for organisations like schools was the need to set realistic expectations. He suggested that modesty was the modus operandi in setting realistic expectations and they should be determined by the performance information experienced. Thus, it is evident that the challenges experienced by teachers in schools B and C are their real lived experiences which

are not considered within the framing of the current RBM approach.

4.2.5 Teachers' Reasons for being anti-RBM

Another minority, namely 16.7% of the educators' population were against the implementation of RBM. The teachers against RBM gave the following concerns as reasons for their dissatisfaction and some of their reasons were similar to those voiced by those teachers who had reservations:

4.2.5.1 Diverse school contexts

These reasons were common to teachers with reservations and those who were anti-RBM. The teachers argued that RBM was an unfair tool to measure and expect good results from teachers who were positioned in diverse school contexts and to also rate individual teachers given the differences in their school contexts. The teachers claimed that due to the different school and classroom contexts in which they operated, it was unfair to prescribe a standardized pass rate for them as the schools differ in physical (instructional materials like laboratories & textbooks etc) and human resources (no of teachers and class size). Mr. Bango and Mrs. Dewa respectively, teachers in school C had these concerns:

I do not think RBM is a fair measuring tool, good results are the target and expected yet the different infrastructures, lack of resources and materials in some schools is not considered. Are they aware that some schools do not even have adequate classrooms and learners spend half the day under a tree sharing one textbook among 10? And they expect
good results?

The outright rejection of the RBM model of performance measurement and rewarding by school C teachers demonstrated a conflict of expectations: between the prescriptions of RBM and the school's context. The teachers were therefore not motivated by a system they believed did not address their material teaching concerns and context but dictated to them what they should be achieving despite their challenges. Their efforts to raise their learners' academic

performance would likely be driven by their intrinsic motivation, the need to master their pedagogy and achieve that inner gratification of success, and not by the regulatory RBM approach. The teachers argued that the RBM only focused on good results without taking into consideration the diverse school contexts: resources and infrastructure: some schools were affluent, some were struggling to obtain resources and some were in abject poverty. The nature of the school setting dictated the availability of resources and materials for effective learning- a similar contention was advanced earlier by Fullan (2006). Although it attracted parents and teachers who were dedicated and passionate about their children or classes, committed to achieving very good results, schools A and B's achievements could never be compared to the ease that more advantaged schools like school C would be able to attain in respect of RBM targets. These teachers felt that the government officials/planners should have undertaken a needs analysis first to ascertain all forms of resourcing and then made provisions for complementary infrastructure, resources and learner materials before the implementation of RBM.

4.2.5.2 RBM Is Uncompromising

The teachers were very vocal on how the RBM was forced down upon the schools and teachers without adequate research and pilot studies to evaluate its relevance to the education system given that it was a tool used in the corporate world and appropriated to education. Mrs. Dewa, a teacher from school C questioned the piloting and commented that it was forced upon teachers because they were accepting in their conduct and wouldn't oppose a policy, so they were soft target for educational reform. Civil servants are by law and signed consent expected to implement whatever policy, mandate or approach the government deems necessary. She further accused the education department in government of failed education policies thus forcing schools to be test subjects for new untested tools:

Where was this RBM even tested?...They saw that it was failing in industry and decided to push

it down to us because they knew that we would just comply to the orders……They are using schools as guinea pigs for their failed policies!

Like-minded teachers like Mr. Bango and Mrs. Dewa strongly argued that no consultations were with teachers; the RBM was dictated to them as a new measure of ensuring service delivery in the education sector and implementing a rating system of schools and teachers. These teachers showed their displeasure with RBM, pointing out that no support systems were also put in place for those learners who were academically challenged and will need extra help bearing in mind that the high teacher-pupil ratios of 1:50 and other factors demotivated teachers and made RBM difficult to implement. Mr. Bango of school C questioned:

Who was consulted on this RBM? We were told by the school head to implement the new measures, no consultation, no explanation, nothing.

Mrs. Dewa added more questions:

How are we supposed to produce high percentage pass rates when we have a whole group of slow learners in our classes? Were they even considered in this RBM plan?

Lack of consultation, no relevant information and no clarity of purpose can cause dissatisfaction and resistance amongst those meant to implement new educational reforms. The shortcomings in the RBM diffusion mechanisms meant that certain issues like material resources, infrastructure and human characteristics like teachers' beliefs about learners' innate intelligence and learning disabilities (slow learners) contributed to the overall performance percentage, and remained obscurely addressed in the introduction of RBM. RBM was not a motivator but a demotivator to these teachers; it opposed their efforts to raise the overall academic performance of their learners by making them focus only on academic assessments such as examinations and disregard other fulfilling and developmental aspects of school

learning like extra curricular and co curricular activities.

3. The Promotion of 'cheating rather than teaching.'

These teachers pointed out that the RBM actually promoted 'cheating' rather than 'teaching' as schools and teachers were put under pressure to produce acceptable results at national grade seven examinations as per expectations of the RBM. In opposition to their counterparts who supported the RBM, the antagonist teachers claimed that RBM compelled them to resort to underhanded practices to achieve the expected results. None of them were forthcoming on the specificity of these practices but they shared and hinted at certain practices that were unfolding in order to meet RBM targets. Mr. Chiwoko, school B insinuated that:

If it's good results they want, good results they will get by any means possible and no questions asked as to how.

Mr. Gumbo, school A added on the insinuation by posing a question:

You read about exam papers leaking, why do you think that happens?

Mr. Bango, school C added:

Some slow learners do not even write the final exams but they get average to good marks, you wouldn't want to know what happens. These things happen. (Mr. Bango, school C)

This was a disturbing and worrisome response as it highlighted that teachers were prepared to cheat their way to good results instead of teaching learners what they needed to master for their growth in order to pass the national examinations. It all came down to the idea that when people are forced to do things without adequate motivation, explanations and reasons, they resorted to devious ways to reach set targets. This dilemma also communicated a glaring discrepancy in information diffusion between the policy makers and the implementers at grassroot level. The teachers' rejection of RBM communicated a lack of knowledge of the rationale and

expectations of RBM, which was also indicative of a dictatorial top-down approach in diffusing RBM. Dandira et al (2020) argue that an uncompromising top-down approach of diffusing an innovation may trigger rejection by the implementers. Clearly these teachers were not consulted nor did they participate in the crafting of RBM for schools and they felt alienated from the educational reform, resisting and rejecting it in their own way. Ng Soo (2019) posited that implementers tended to resist reforms they were not part of in planning.

4.2.5.3 RBM promotes results orientation negating developmental learning steps

Teachers also pointed out that by its very definition, RBM had forced them to be results oriented and focused at the expense of gradually developing learners in terms of their academic growth in concepts.

They claimed that the results target of RBM forced schools and teachers to only be results oriented robots focusing on what would be assessed, instead of gradually developing learners in their disciplines, where care is taken for the progression of concepts and sequencing of work. In a teaching/learning situation, concepts begin from simple gradually moving to more complex and difficult matter. Concepts can be introduced in class and given as homework to be revised before the next lesson. This assures conceptual development: continuity, sequencing and progression of concepts. However, when teachers are results so focused, this does not happen, as they explained. Teachers claimed that:

Mrs. Sayi, school A: *We are like **results machines** now, totally focused on results and disregarding all teaching foundations we were taught at college, just drilling for results!*

Ms. Musa, school A: *There's nothing we can do, no time for concepts development, just **'drill and kill'***

Mr. Mehlo, school B: *Now we just go straight to past test papers and explain concepts as we*

revise, a complete opposite of how we were trained to teach.

Ms. Ncube, school B: *In my case I pick the grade seven class from grade five, that is when we start revising past grade seven exam papers, just to check how they fare and what to concentrate on.*

This obsession with results has been shown by the intensive revision of past grade seven papers as early as grade five without commencing with themes in thecurriculum per grade, thus the focus is on **learning from and for assessment**- the examination and not on **learning accompanied with assessment.** The focus on results by teachers was a typical example of the effects as posited in Herzberg's hygiene factors that caused demotivation. In this case the policy expectations of RBM had trapped teachers to abandon their professional training of teaching concepts developmentally but to concentrate on strategies steeped in assessment that would yield the desired performance to place the school on a high rating: efforts like revision of exam papers from as early as grade five before teaching content knowledge and applying skills. At the same time, the focus on results by teachers was also indicative of a lack of clarity on RBM. This pointed to a **deficiency by the policy makers in communicating and aligning RBM to teaching and learning in a specific spatial context of the schools and teachers.** Clarity on issues of RBM and the teaching and learning context play a pivotal role in implementation of a new policy reform. The teachers' responses and actions in pursuing RBM drew attention to their **maladaptive teaching to achieve RBM targets.** Instead of teaching and learning and then assessing, RBM has trapped teachers to taking an assessment and using it to teach concepts thus eroding intrinsic learning embedded in the curriculum; with the development of concepts being progressively done.

4.2.5.4 Negligence of Non-Examinable Subjects

Non-examinable subjects like Physical Education, Home Economics, Art and Music had since been abandoned in grade seven classes as teachers were in pursuit of academic results. Teachers

reasoned that it was a waste of valuable time to teach subjects that would not contribute value to their pass rates as these subjects were not examined in the exit examinations. Grade seven teachers posited that:

Mr. Gumbo, school A: *Personally, I do not have time for subjects not examined; we are too busy to cover ground on the examined subjects.*

Ms. Ncube, school B: *Sometimes I give a few minutes for learners to relax by free style art or music, I do not even plan for these subjects anymore.*

Mrs. Dewa, school C: *If the PE teacher does not come for his lesson, we use that time to put more work in either Mathematics or Environmental Science.*

As can be deduced from the teachers' positions, the thrust of the RBM had coerced them to abandon non-examinable subjects or learning areas in favour of those areas that contributed to the percentage pass rate. In as much as the RBM aimed at raising learners' performance, it was also causing an obliteration of skills based learning areas like Music, Art, Home Economics and Physical Education which would have contributed to the full development of the child. Trading these non-examinable learning areas for other subjects resulted in learners being denied relaxing time in Art, music and dance and healthy exercise in PE. Teachers in this case were motivated by RBM in as far as examinations were concerned, neglecting non-examinable learning areas. In RBM rationale, these areas should also be evidenced to have been accorded due diligence during the teaching learning process. The behavior of the teachers in neglecting these learning areas reflects an unhealthy commitment to RBM.

This cohort of teachers strongly felt that RBM should be disregarded and schools and teachers should be left to educating the children holistically without the overwhelming pressure of RBM. Mr. Bango, a teacher from School C opined:

I am from a different school of thought…., I don't believe ***in teaching for results****, I believe in teaching the child as a whole, teaching them everything they will need to function in life, not just obtaining good results.*

Mr. Bango's response, as well as the views of other teachers which went against the obsessive application of RBM in schools, indicated a number of flaws in the use RBM. Research has shown that implementing RBM in the public sector in developing countries like Zimbabwe was complex because of a number of factors such as applicability and affordability of reforms. The reasons derived from literature on RBM implementation resonate with the concerns raised by the teachers. According to Bester (2012, p. 29), "the policies that guide the mandate and operations of the RBM are difficult to alter." Amjad (2008, p. 2), had echoed that the RBM was imported from developed countries "by consultants keen to showcase its potentials instead of dove tailing it to the needs of the receiving country." Pazvakavambwa (2015) confirmed that Zimbabwe imported the integrated RBM model that was said to have been successful in Malaysia. This clearly implied that this tool of RBM was sadly not tailored for local needs: to suit the circumstances of particular schools in Zimbabwe.

RBM's emphasis on results undermined the holistic teaching of the learners. Madhekeni (2012, p. 125), pointed out that the introduction of RBM, with its foundations on financial, management and programme accountability in Zimbabwe meant that schools had to shift from activity completion (syllabi completion) to results-oriented performance. Previously, the mandate was on completing the syllabi in schools; that all grades completed their mandated syllabi. Presently, RBM promotes performance results (Dandira et al., 2020). Teachers had reservations and argued that RBM forced them to produce results at the expense of holistic development of the learner, namely teaching for life.

In summary, the analysis of the schools and teachers' responses and views on the RBM indicated that:

- The RBM had motivated them to seek and implement academic performance improving strategies in an effort to raise their learners' academic performance.
- The RBM had motivated them to be results focused, encouraging them to prioritise examinable learning areas over non-examinable ones.
- In as much as the RBM was being implemented in schools, teachers were not very conversant with its rationale, purpose and its multifaceted nature.
- RBM presently in schools was not very adaptable with the particular schools' contexts being disregarded in terms of settings and learners' abilities.
- The inadaptability of RBM and the lack of adequate information/knowledge on its applications had demotivated some teachers. This has had causal-effects on some uncharacteristic pedagogical conduct like teaching for exams only and getting expected results by any means possible as insinuated by some teachers.

4.3 Performance oriented strategies used in schools

RBM motivated teachers drew from research, their repertoire of methodologies and academic performance enhancing strategies in their efforts to raise learners' performance, in their classrooms. The strategies employed by teachers supported by their schools to achieve, improve or to continue producing good results (from the Heads of schools and individual grade seven teachers and in the work-plans by individual teachers) are detailed in the following checklist:

Strategies Used	School A	School B	School C
1. Deployment of qualified and experienced teachers into grade 7	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
2. Sourcing of resources and materials to enhance pass Rate	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
3. Enforcing a vast and wide reading culture	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
4. Daily morning revision work before lessons	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
5. Extensive homework monitored by parents	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
6. Extra lessons in the afternoon and weekends to complete syllabi early	✓ □	✓ □	
7. Holiday/ vacation schooling focusing on revisions	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
8. Remediation of at-risk- learners	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
9. Team approach with subject specialist to help grade sevens and staff development	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
10. Projects and research work	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
11. Extensive revision of past papers	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
12. Weekly tests on concepts covered.	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □

Table 4. 5: Checklist Table

4.3.1 Discussion of strategies

The check list of strategies 1-12 were all used by the three sampled schools' grade seven classes in Kwekwe urban district at the time of the researcher's visit in April 2017. The following is a discussion of each strategy connecting it with the relevant literature in a discussion.

4.3.1.1 Deployment of qualified and experienced teachers in Grade Seven

As shown in the first item on the checklist, all schools had adopted the globally recognised strategy of deploying qualified and experienced teachers to take charge of the national grade seven examination writing classes. This information was publicly displayed in heads of schools' offices. Barber and Mourshed (2007), Schmoker (2011) and Hattie (2012) reiterated that quality instruction which improved academic performance can only be delivered by quality teachers. Quality teachers were those who were qualified, experienced and had a wide repertoire of instructional strategies that improve learners' academic performance (Fitchett & Heafner, 2018; Chaturvedi et al., 2021).

4.3.1.1 Sourcing of resources and materials to enhance pass rates

The availability of academic performance improving resources and materials is fundamental in enhancing pass rates. Scott (2017) and Millillin et al. (2021) concur with Elger (2007) that the availability and use of relevant resource materials to promote academic success could not be over emphasised. Learning materials and resources like textbooks, revision books, videos and other learning media are essential in stimulating the senses and cognitive development of learners to acquire knowledge from the various sources. All schools in the study were aware of this fundamental requirement as evidenced by their responsibility in sourcing resources and materials to enhance their learners' pass rates.

4.3.1.1 Enforcing a vast and wide reading culture

The value of a reading culture can never be underestimated as the foundational base or springboard for the acquisition of knowledge. Schools in this study had both class and school

reading libraries. Learners had a book borrowing system from both the class and school library such that on a daily basis each learner had two reading books; one core reader and one supplementary reader. Alex-Nmecha and Horsfall (2019) acknowledged that a school that promoted, encouraged and provided for a wide reading culture among its learners was assured of great improvements of test scores. Much of what learners acquire as knowledge does not necessarily come directly from classroom instruction but from reading widely various sources of knowledge. All participating schools in this study encouraged a reading culture in the classrooms and as homework. Grade seven teachers acknowledged that:

Mrs. Dewa, school C: *We have class libraries from which learners take turns to select core readers which they read during library time in class. Learners also choose and sign out a supplementary reader from the school library once a week.*

Ms. Musa, school A: *The reading culture in our school is very helpful in that it helps learners comprehend and expand their vocabulary in both English and Shona.*

Ms. Ncube, school B: We encourage our learners to read, both in class and at home, because through reading they discover new knowledge and meanings.

Learners were provided with readers to complete reading in class during reading time and also given set pages to read at home under the supervision of their parents or guardians. The reading culture in the schools under this study played an important part in raising the learners' performance as it widened their vocabulary and improved their comprehension skills. Reading facilitates the discovery of new concepts and helps with understanding of abstract concepts. Lee (2020) adds that reading also increases curiosity to find patterns in events thereby developing one's critical thinking and problem solving skills as well as accentuating a person's comprehension abilities.

4.3.1.1 Morning revision work

All the schools under the study had morning revision work as a school policy. This morning work was usually a revision exercise of content knowledge learnt the previous day. The purpose of the morning work was to occupy early arrivals at school and to act as introduction to what was to be learnt during the course of the day. By the time the teacher arrived and schooling began, the learners would be ready to continue from where the previous lesson ended and then progress further. Morning work promoted continuity, sequencing, and progression of concepts in classes. For example, if a class had morning work on monthly interest rates in Mathematics, the previous day the teacher would have introduced and demonstrated how to calculate interest in buying and selling on account. The next lesson on that day would then be on annual interest rates. Garira et al. (2019) advised that morning work promoted responsibility for individual learning and set the tone to focus among learners and it also came highly recommended as a means of assuring an orderly learning environment in schools especially in the early part of the day. Classes with morning revision of the previous day's work had a program to adhere to and learners were not found to be milling in corridors, bathrooms and play areas before school started. Morning work was evaluated as a good strategy of improving academic achievement as learners were able to correct their previous errors and recap learnt matter among themselves (Garira et al., 2019).

4.3.1.1 Extensive homework

Regular homework was evidence of a teachers' commitment to ensuring that learners practiced/applied the concepts taught so that they were able to perform well. Teachers had high expectations of their learners and it also demonstrated the teacher's effort to consistently work towards meeting set targets. Rubie-Davies (2014) and Lemov (2010) argue that a climate of high expectations for learners was key to improving student performance. Having high expectations for learners was demonstrated by the level of learning tasks or exercises that

learners engaged in consistently or were given. Therefore, in a scenario of high expectations both teachers and learners set high targets to be achieved and learners are given demanding class and homework exercises that test all the cognitive domains. Schooling et al. (2010), Walker and Caprar (2019) and Millillin et al. (2021) asserted that with instructional foundation, one of the fundamental principles associated with learner centredness was the pivotal role played by parents and guardians; learners undertake homework under the guidance and supervision of parents/guardians, that is, they are assisted and monitored at home. It can be deduced that such parents and guardians were those who were enlightened, who were aware of the syllabi contents as well as the school targets and expectations. The parents and guardians were also in consultation with the class teachers discussing how best they could assist learners to achieve their targets. Schools in this research study had homework in their school policies and grade seven teachers reiterated:

Mr. Gumbo, school A: *We give extensive homework on a daily basis, it's a school policy and it is always a topic for discussion during termly consultations.*

Mrs. Phiri, school B: *Our class homework is usually a recap exercise of concepts learnt that day in particular learning areas*

Mrs. Sayi, school A: *Sometimes I give homework as a research exercise on a topic/concept for the next day, especially in Shona proverbs, metaphors and idioms.*

During the observations, the researcher established that this was what prevailed in the three participating schools. Learners were given extensive homework including reading, in the major learning areas and learners had to be closely supervised.

4.3.1.1 Extra lessons

Extra (supplementary) lessons either in the afternoons or weekends have been a growing trend globally in an effort to complete syllabi early and improve academic results; Zimbabwean schools have followed this trend. Grade seven teachers from the participating schools

emphasized the importance of extra lessons:

Mr. Chuma, school A: *Extra lessons are now the means to an end, there's no way we can complete the work load without extra lessons.*

Mr. Gumbo, school A: *With so much work to cover, extra lessons are helpful in that we get to cover some ground and have enough time for revisions later.*

Mr. Mehlo, school B: *With this work load and high teacher/pupil ratio, extra lessons allow back tracking and fast-tracking learners.*

Mr. Chiwoko, school B: *Extra lessons are now the new norm; they are now the only means of reinforcing learning concepts.*

Ms. Musa, school A: *Extra lessons allow us to co-teach although informally, I have learners from neighbouring schools in my extra lesson classes. Some of my learners also attend extra lessons from teachers near their homes.*

Supplementary lessons have been evaluated by Munikwa and Mutumwe (2011), Chidakwa and Chitekuteku (2012) and Garira et al. (2019) as one of the strategies or interventions of improving results. Learners going for extra lessons at extra cost have become the norm even in Sub- Saharan Africa. Grade seven classes from the schools participating in the study also took the strategy of extra lessons as a norm. These lessons were usually conducted by the class teachers or other teachers from neighbouring schools who were experts in certain learning areas and were aware of the syllabi specifications. These lessons have the benefit of exposing learners to different learning techniques and different questioning and presentation of concepts. This provides learners with a wider knowledge base and alternatives in problem solving.

4.3.1.1 Holiday/ Vacation Schooling

Another emerging growing trend with examination writing classes is that of holiday or vacation

or summer schooling depending on which country one is in. However, not much research is available as yet on this strategy, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Learners in the three schools (A, B, C) were engaged in extensive learning during the school holidays either as a means of completing the syllabi or revising examination matter. The schools in the study also used holiday schooling as a means of ensuring good academic results. Mr. Dube, the headmaster of school A explained:

We have introduced holiday schooling as a school. What happens here is that we put our four grade seven classes into one huge group that is sub-divided into three ability groupings of above average, average and below average. We then recruit or hire subject specialists from around the class to coach the learners for examination readiness while our four grade seven teachers assist with the marking of written scripts. The response has been overwhelming so far, from both the learners and the hired specialists.

This was the time used by the researcher to gather data from schools as time tables were relaxed; teachers and school heads could afford me time as they were less busy. I found teachers and learners in all the three schools engaged in intensive revision of past lessons' concepts and examination papers. Since it was the April school holiday, new topics were also being introduced to complete the various syllabi. Mr. Bango and Mrs. Dewa respectively, grade seven teachers from school C, concurred in that:

Holiday schooling affords us time to concentrate on the important stuff without undue disturbances from other school activities.

We get to cover ground in the syllabi and have adequate time for revisions as we do not stick to the time table.

Teachers claimed that this was a viable strategy as it enabled the early completion of syllabi, revision of covered work and a consolidation of content knowledge taught. Grade seven teachers in school B were in consensus that:

Holiday schooling has increased examination readiness, our learners get to be confident in exams by the time we get to October for exams because we would have covered almost every concept and revised all past papers available. Learners who attend holiday schooling have a much better chance of scoring higher marks in the exams.

It was argued by the teachers that by the time learners got to the national examination towards the end of the year, they would be academically ready, hence improved performance. Unfortunately, learners had to trade their holidays for extra lessons.

4.3.1.1 Remediation of 'at-risk'- learners

All the three schools had remedial policies in the school mission statements and individual classes had remedial programmes running concurrently with daily lessons for at-risk (underperforming) learners. Each class teacher was responsible for the remediation of their at-risk learners. They designed programmes best suited to their learners and had to find time to back track on concepts with these learners. Mrs. Pasi, the head teacher at school C, asserted that:

Remedial education is an important aspect in our school policy and mission statement. Class teachers are encouraged to identify slow learners in their classes, design a remedial programme for intervention and implement it during the course of their classroom instruction.

According to Mun Ling Lo (2012) remedial lessons emphasize teaching to retain knowledge for later retrieval and application. The constant revisits, recapping and reducing of content knowledge into smaller units such as concepts and their relation to each other were the cornerstones of remedial instruction (Ismajli & Imani-Morina, 2018). Inevitably teaching for improved performance implied resorting to ongoing remedial instruction for learners' knowledge retention. Mr. Gumbo, a grade seven teacher in school A contended that:

Sometimes I resort to treating the whole class as remedial class, where I break concepts into

smaller units, do lots of recap work and revisit problematic concepts. Doing this is one of my secrets in maintaining good results.

4.3.1.1 Team based Staff Development Approach

School based staff development sessions which are underpinned by team approaches are perceived to be the life blood of vibrant schools keen on improving their leaners' performance. The McKinsey Report (2007) highlighted that quality teachers understood that their fellow colleagues were their greatest resource and they worked together to master new strategies and refine their practice. Lightfoot et al. (2018) concur with Penuel et al. (2007) that as teacher quality had the greatest impact on student learning, it could be improved by providing more learning opportunities for teachers to have dialogue amongst themselves, reflecting and evaluating their instructional practice. These insights come down to school-based staff development sessions in which teachers educate each other on the latest trends in instructional methodologies and deliberate on the best possible means of solving learning problems in their individual classes. Mr. Dube, the school head of school A gave a synopsis of staff developments:

In our school, we encourage teachers to list problem concepts they encounter in their classes, we then schedule sessions around the highlighted problems. We get volunteers to demystify each problem by explaining and demonstrating how best to present the concept, for example teaching creative story writing in Languages. Sometimes we also get teachers with new methods of teaching concepts to share their experiences with the rest of the staff. These sessions are usually very vibrant with lots of brainstorming.

Staff development sessions are an effective way of making classroom teaching into a collaborative effort. Implied in the noted assertions was the notion of co-teaching, using subject specialists within the school to present their ideas on pedagogical approaches on given topics or concepts in the grade seven classes. The headmaster of school B, Mr. Moyo shared:

We encourage other subject specialists in the school to come in and help out with the grade seven teachers especially during the holiday schooling when their classes are on holiday.

It was gratifying in this study to find that staff development and team approaches were evident in all the three schools participating in the study. Schools had long realized the value of these efforts in raising their learners' academic performance.

4.3.1.1 Projects and a Research Approach

The three schools, participating in this study, used a project and research approach to encourage learners to cultivate their potential and boost their self-esteem. The projects and research methods approaches to teaching have been recommended by Mun Ling Lo (2012) and later by Moate and Cox (2015, p. 86) as the metacognitive approach to instruction in which cognitive skills are further developed. This approach has proven to result in positive and immediate gains in performance as learners are given the opportunity to prove their worth and test their intellectual ability by doing research projects on learning area concepts and topics (Terada, 2021). Learners were given projects to research and work on as individuals and then present them to the class on a given due date. For example, learners were given projects like the early settlement shelters in the Shona communities, the indigenous fruit trees found in the area, the nutritional and medicinal value of the said fruits. The researcher found some of these projects on display in the classrooms.

However, in a study session on project-based learning by the George Lucas Foundation in the United States which I attended virtually in 2021, made me realize that participating schools in this study used the project approach as a summation of learned concepts in class. The project-based learning approach on the other hand is a learner-centred approach whereby learners themselves take charge of their learning and engage in hands on activities in their communities. The topics are assigned to them by their teachers who act as partners in the discovery of knowledge. Project-based learning is explained by Schuetz (2018) as an instructional approach

designed to give learners the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills through engaging in projects set around challenges and problems they may face in the real world. Succinctly, it is learning by doing. Learners get to engage in identifying causes and solutions to real-life problems within their communities as part of their learning objective in a specific learning area or a combination of learning areas. The project-based learning approach can be utilized in a wide array of learning areas or subjects with equally favourable outcomes. In that line of thinking, Shuetz (2018, p. 25) provided the following examples:

- Science-based project on animal habitats and characteristics, a visit to the zoo, Game Park or even a farm would provide lots of learning opportunities and answer an array of critical questions in the course content.
- English language can be blended with Social Sciences in answering classical questions on gender related chores and mainstreaming in both cultural and religious aspects.
- Mathematics; instead of the drill and kill methods, problems can be presented as codes to be broken or decoded for survival such as where to get water and food in the wild or for national security.

The success narratives of improved learners' performance with the attainment of good test scores in the United States elementary schools, prompted this researcher to realize that primary schools in Kwekwe urban district were using this approach as a conclusion to class learning instead of a point of departure as an instructional method. The projects learners engaged in were not similar to those described by Shuetz (2018). Ideally, used as a learner-centred instructional method, the projects approach yields even better results as evidenced by the improved test scores in American elementary schools.

4.3.1.1 Extensive revision of past examination papers

Revision of past examination papers is one of the most common strategies used in classrooms at all levels to improve performance. All the three schools in the study also appreciated the

value of this strategy and were using it extensively. Past exam papers were being revised by all the grade seven classes which I visited during the holiday schooling in April 2017. Participating schools were also sourcing exam papers from neighbouring schools. Some of these papers were school based, set by subject specialists in the schools. There was a healthy exchange of these papers. By revising past papers learners get to familiarise with the questioning styles used, the patterns and the general scope of examinations. Scott (2017) contends that top students get to the top not by their natural abilities but by sheer hard work and revision of past exam papers. Scott adds that revising past papers enables learners to recognise patterns in the questioning and content, apply knowledge to different types of questioning and make sense of the examination structure.

4.3.1.12 Weekly tests

The three schools in this study used the weekly testing strategy extensively in their classrooms more as an evaluative method and to get the learners accustomed to examinations. For example, classes had weekly tests in Mathematics, English, Shona and the Content subjects made up of Environmental Science, Social Studies and RME. A weekly exposure to these assessments under exam conditions of stipulated times and work space prepared learners for the final examination. It was believed that by the time the learners got to the final national exams, they would be so used to working under test conditions, they would be at ease in the exam. Ms. Ncube, a grade seven teacher in school B, summarized the essence of these weekly tests as follows:

We give our learners weekly assessment tests to trouble shoot problem areas, aclimatise them to exam conditions and evaluate our efforts and the learners' performance.

This has proven to result in generally good performances as panic attacks were reduced and careless mistakes were avoided when learners were suddenly placed under examination conditions. Tomlinson (2011) and Ismajli and Imani-Morina (2018) listed assessments as one

of the principles of instructional foundation. Assessment is an on-going process tightly linked to instruction as teachers constantly gather information on how the learners were performing at a given point in order to plan for interventions (Ismajli and Imani-Morina, 2018). Kizlik (2012) explains that all tests are assessments. Teachers test or assess to evaluate the effectiveness of their instructional strategies and to determine the level of grasp of their learners. The implemented performance improvement strategies had the following effects:

POSITION

SCHOOL	2014	2015	2016
A	5	3	1
B	2	3	4
C	1	2	3

Table 4.6: District Positioning out of 100

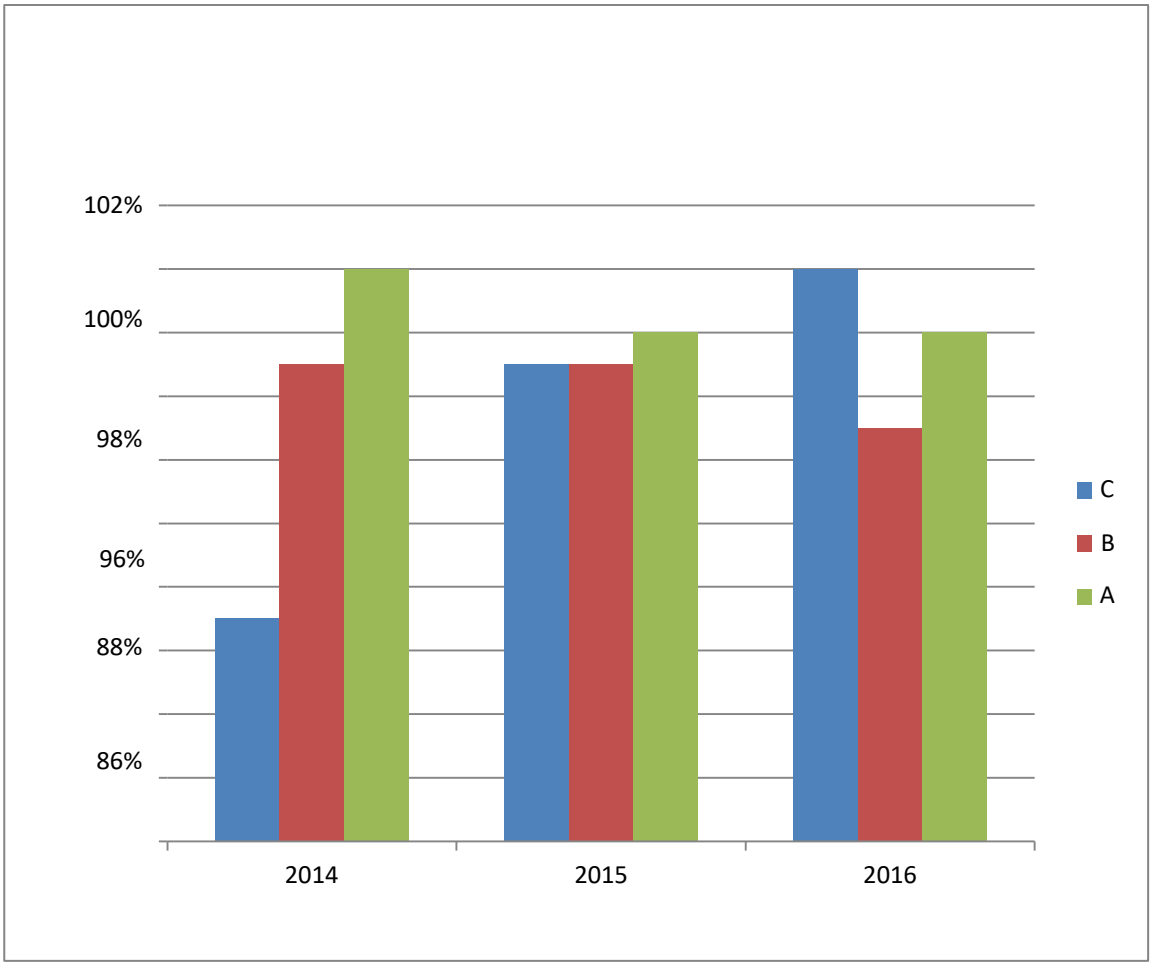

Figure 4.2: Effects of strategies graph

As can be deduced from the schools' achievement graphs and district positioning, the strategies employed by the schools and teachers were apparently yielding good, very good results. Despite the listed negations to the RBM, it appeared most schools and teachers had responded positively to the nudge to produce more favourable results. The Schools' Heads confirmed that their schools did not enjoy such high annual performances before the RBM era, therefore in as much as educators might have appeared not to favour RBM; it had motivated them to try various strategies in an effort to produce good academic results. Interestingly, at onset of the RBM in 2005, school C had a low average performance of between 40-60% and relatively

against the RBM system, but through implementing performance improving strategies on their learners, its performance levels had steadily surpassed the other two schools for the period 2014- 2016. This could be due to it being an independent school as it had a very low teacher/pupil ratio of 1: 25, a very sound resource base in terms of motivated teachers, learning materials like textbooks and access to digital platforms through the availed internet for both learners and teachers. Teachers at school C were privately supplemented on their government salaries hence their motivation. School A had maintained its above average performance and generally most of the teachers were motivated by the RBM as evidenced by the quality of the percentage levels which kept rising from above 88% to 100% in the same period. School B considered an average performer and with some teachers with reservations, reflected RBM motivation as evidenced by the average performance in the same period.

At this juncture, it is imperative to juxtapose the listed strategies used by schools and teachers with those referred to in literature review and note how they compare. The following table gives such a summation with strategies given numbers 1-12 as they appeared on the checklist.

4.3.2 Comparative analysis of strategies

Strategy Used	Mentioned in Literature Review	New
1. Quality and Experienced Teachers	✓ □	-
2. Resources and Materials	✓ □	-
3. Reading Culture	✓ □	-
4. Morning Work	*	✓ □
5. Extensive Homework	✓ □	
6. Extra lessons	✓ □	✓

7. Vacation School	✓ □	✓
8. Remediation	✓ □	
9. Team Approach	✓ □	
10. Project and Research	✓ □	✓
11. Extensive Revision	✓ □	
12. Assessments- Catering for different abilities	✓ □	

Table 4.7: Comparison of strategies

As evidenced, the schools and teachers employed tried and tested strategies of achieving improved performance as well as the globally used ones. The only new strategy used was that of daily morning work. However, this was not exactly new as the morning work is meant to occupy learners before the arrival of the teacher and the official start of the learning time-table. The work covered in these morning exercises was mainly revision of already learnt concepts. For example, I found Mathematics morning work on rounding off to the nearest 10, 100, 1000 and 10 000 in one of the classes. I established that it was what they had done in the previous lesson and they continued to the nearest 100 000 and million that particular day. Some strategies discussed in the literature review like differentiated instruction, variation theory and feedback were used generally in the day-to-day teaching in the classrooms. Vacation schooling, extra lessons and project-based learning are relatively new strategies in Sub-Sahara Africa.

4.4 Reactions to the new curriculum implementation

The same schools' heads and grade three teachers (n=12) were face-to-face interviewed on the new curriculum issues. Grade three teachers faced a double-edged sword of implementing a new curriculum and a RBM approach to learners' academic performance. The following were their coded responses identifying participants' positions.

4.4.1 New Curriculum Responses

School	All in Support		Mixed Feelings		Against		TOTAL
	Head	Teachers	Head	Teachers	Head	Teachers	
A	1	0	0	4	0	0	5
B	1	1	0	2	0	0	4
C	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
TOTAL	3	1	0	6	0	2	12

Table4.8: New curriculum participant responses

From this table, it was interesting to note that the Heads of the schools as agents of change were all in favour of the new curriculum as a whole with no misgivings or additions. It was of note again that the school C's teachers were totally against the new curriculum while most teachers had mixed feelings about it. This was how it translated in terms of percentage population representation; 33, 3% in favour, 50% mixed feelings and 16. 7% against.

4.4.2 New Curriculum Responses

The schools as represented by the heads of schools and the teachers' reactions to the new curriculum reflected crucial issues in curriculum change implementation. Curriculum change implementation theory states that innovations such as curriculum change are guided by the knowledge of change, complexity and context for their reception and implementation (Fullan, 2009, Nevenglosky et al., 2020; Phillips and Klein, 2022).

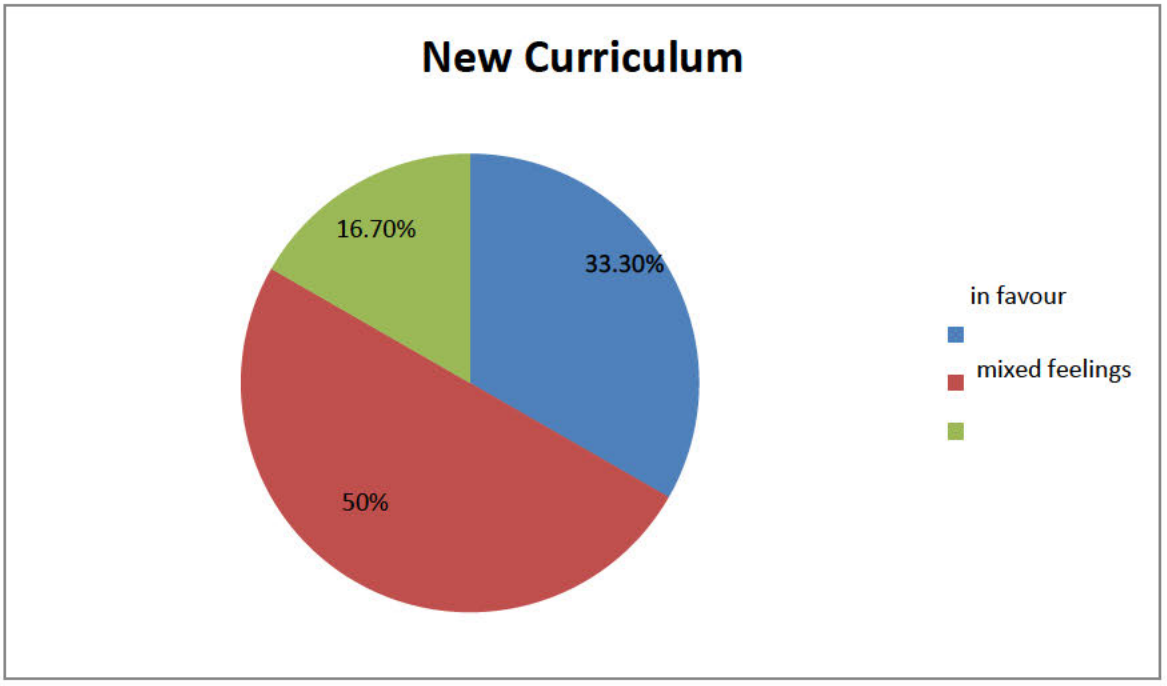

Figure 4.3: New curriculum responses

The 33% in support of the new curriculum was a reflection of the teachers' knowledge of the new curriculum rationale. These teachers were therefore motivated to seek implementation strategies that would introduce a new era in education. In as much as the new curriculum motivated them, the 50%, half the population of the teachers with reservations was an indication of resistance to change. This conservatism was probably due to lack of clarity and knowledge on the change rationale among other issues of resources and personnel expertise to implement the envisaged change. The 16.7%, the minority of teachers against the implementation of the new curriculum could be an indication that these teachers had no knowledge of the new curriculum rationale, purpose and goals, hence demotivated by the dictatorial policy. It could also be an indication of the complexities of their context and mind sets which were not adaptive to change. As the discussion on reasons for supporting, having reservations and being totally against the new curriculum unfolds, the issues of knowledge, context and complexity will be illuminated.

4.4.3 Professional Profiles of Participant Teachers

The table below reflects the teacher characteristics which had a bearing to the new curriculum implementation motivation state.

Name	**School**	**Qualification**	**Experience (Years)**	**Grade Taught**
Mr. Dube	A	B. ED	25	Head Teacher
Mrs. Munoda	A	Dip. ED	35	Three (3)
Mrs. Mufa	A	B. ED	30	Three
Ms. Kufa	A	B.ED	24	Three
Mrs. Ruoko	A	Dip. ED	17	Three
Mr. Moyo	B	B. ED	30	Head Teacher
Mrs. Muza	B	Dip. ED	33	Three
Mrs. Tsuro	B	B.ED	28	Three
Mrs. Tenzi	B	B. ED	18	Three
Mrs. Pasi	C	M. ED	35	Head Teacher
Mrs Rwendo	C	B.ED	27	Three
Mrs Mayers	C	Dip. ED	23	Three
Total	**12**	**In Favor 33.3%**	**Reservations 50%**	**Against 16.7%**

Table 4.9: Professional Profiles of Participants

In this study, twelve grade three teachers (n=12) were interviewed face-to-face individually on their views on the new curriculum and how it has impacted on the implementation strategies they sought. These teachers were the right candidates and participants for this study because of

their qualifications and experience which allowed them to be more receptive and understanding of the government policies they had served for so long. They were also the grade three teachers who pioneered the new curriculum and were tasked to seek effective implementation strategies to set an example to the other grades joining later. The effective implementation of the new curriculum would eventually improve the learners' performance which is the aim of both the new curriculum and this study.

The interview outcomes of the grade three teachers were synchronized into the following themes and the analysis followed suit:

In Support	**Reservations**	**Totally Against**
Inevibility of change	Inadequate preparation	Curriculum clouded
Policy matter	Use of resource personnel	Resistance to change
Accepting the challenge	Textbook knowledge depth	
Balance and relevance	Ignorance of rationale	
	Lack of feedback	
	Differences in implementation	
	Repetition of concepts	
	Inclusivity	
	Use of technology	
	Content coverage and	
	Large classes	

Table 4.10: New curriculum themes

4.4.4 Reasons in Support of the New Curriculum

Teachers from the participating schools provided the following reasons to support the new curriculum:

4.4.4.1 Inevitability of Change

Some (33.3%) of the educators were in support of the new curriculum because they argued that change was inevitable and it was long overdue. These educators pointed out that this paradigm shift in curriculum was the results of their concerns they forwarded during curriculum change consultations and therefore they saw no reason not to embrace it wholly. A grade three teacher in School A, Mrs. Munoda acknowledged:

I had the privilege to be part of the consultative group and also attended the first seminar on new curriculum introduction… it is the way to go and it was long overdue anyway. Some of the suggestions we forwarded are included in the new curriculum.

Mrs. Muza, from school B added:

We were waiting eagerly for this change in curriculum after the consultative sessions we had last year. We are a global village now so we should be in line with what is happening globally.

They also acknowledged that living in a global community meant that as schools and teachers they were to keep abreast ofthe changes taking place across the globe. The changes in global perspectives, politics, technology and trade meant that schools curricula should inevitably change to meet the new demands in the knowledge base. The teachers' readiness to embrace change was reflective of their ownership of change. Curriculum change theorists argue that once change implementers are partnered in the crafting of the change, they own that change (Ng Soo, 2019). These teachers owned the new curriculum; they were motivated by it and were ready to find effective strategies to implement it successfully as they wouldn't want their project to fail. Having ownership of the new curriculum meant that the teachers had the requisite knowledge of its rationale, purpose and envisaged goals. They were therefore in the right frame of coming up with implementation strategies that would enable a smooth take off. A properly implemented curriculum has a ripple effect of benefiting the learners it is intended

for, hence raising their performance levels.

4.4.4.2 A Matter of Policy

The educators also highlighted that as a matter of policy, it was now a directive from the government and them as implementers were left with no choice but to implement as directed.

Mr. Moyo, the school head of school B pointed out that:

The new curriculum is government policy now. You don't question policy, our duty is to implement as directed.

It was what it was and they were embracing the challenge to implement new syllabi content and requirements. Grade three teachers from the participating schools pointed out that:

Mrs. Mufa, school A: *As civil servants we have no choice in matters of policy, if they say jump, we don't dare ask how high?*

Mrs. Ruoko, school A: *I am not sure what this new curriculum is about but I will find my way in implementing it.*

Mrs. Tenzi, school B: *Change is change. Whether we understand it or not, if the ministry says change, we comply.* (Mrs. Tenzi, school B)

As civil servants, the teachers pointed out that when it came to government policy issues they had no choice but to implement it as stated because that was what they had signed up for; to implement policies. The question of whether they understood what the new curriculum entailed 'was a topic for another day', so they reasoned with the researcher. These teachers' reactions reflected a state of demotivation induced by directive policies consistent with Herzberg's theory of demotivating hygiene factors such as policy directives. The teachers therefore exhibited less enthusiasm in implementing the new curriculum and had a ripple effect on the implementation strategies: using strategies induced by management only.

4.4.4.3 Challenges of new curricula content

These teachers were of the opinion that the new content/ concepts in the new curriculum was a welcome challenge for them to try out new strategies and methodologies in their lessons as well as expand their knowledge base through research and consultations they had with new curriculum experts from the government. Mrs. Muza, a grade three teacher from school B exclaimed:

The topics in the new curriculum are challenging, I now need to read around a bit before planning a lesson and think out of the box on how to introduce and teach new matter. For example there are lots of new concepts in Heritage and Fareme that I am not familiar with like burial rituals in some cultures and religions in Zimbabwe.

The teachers argued that the new curriculum presented them with a challenge to improve their service delivery and expertise and to be in sync with the dynamism in education. Mrs. Mufa, a teacher from school A reiterated:

Now with the new curriculum you cannot get into the classroom and say open page this and do exercise that…it now means thorough research, consultations and lesson preparation or else you will find yourself at a loss in front of learners.

The ushering in of the new curriculum had meant that teachers were now researching and learning new content and planning how to approach and teach their lessons which they previously didn't do. For instance, lots of research and consultations with religious gate keepers on Indigenous, Islamic and Judaism religions in Fareme which were previously not part of the curriculum. These teachers' reactions reflected an excitable state of motivation by the new curriculum and a deep understanding of what the new curriculum goals were meant to achieve. This combination of motivation and knowledge implied that the teachers would research, consult and implement effective implementation strategies. Research on curriculum change

implementation demonstrates that a diligently implemented curriculum cascades into improved learners' performance (Marovah et al., 2020).

4.4.4.4 Balance and Relevance of Concepts

The teachers in support of the new curriculum claimed that there was now a balance and relevance in what learners were learning to the reality around them and even their cultures were taken into consideration. Mrs. Tsuro, from school B enthused:

I like the new curriculum especially in learning areas like Science and Technology and Heritage, learners now get to learn real life experiences like our very own heritage and celebrations like Independence, Heroes and Defense forces days which they actually witness and view on TV. Our topic on Water Hazards was aptly explained this term as learners saw the disasters created by the actual floods which we experienced this term.

Ms. Kufa from school A added:

I like the shift from R.M.E to FAREME, that is, Family Religion And Moral Education because instead of the wide ranging Biblical Stories we used to teach in R.M.E we now concentrate on family and moral values as underpinned by our different religious beliefs.

The advocates of the new curriculum appreciated the balance and relevance of the concepts covered in the new syllabi, that it was more home grown, learners learnt more about themselves, their past and then moved on to more complex issues that addressed the global context, thus there was localization of the curriculum and progression in the syllabus from simple to complex concepts. This is in line with the basic principle of learning, from known to the unknown, from concrete to abstract (Bruner, 1965; Marovah et al., 2020). The new curriculum also promoted religious and cultural diversity through learning areas like Family, Religion and Moral Education (Fareme) and Heritage, thereby accentuating values of tolerance, respect and appreciation of the diverse religions and cultures in Zimbabwe.

4. 4.5 Reasons for Mixed Feelings/ Reservations

Half the teachers who participated (n=12) had mixed views regarding the new curriculum because of the following concerns:

4.4.5.1 Inadequate Preparation

A key area of contention was the marshaling in of the new curriculum into schools without adequate provision of resources, materials and staff development on the new concepts in the new syllabi. The headmaster of School A, Mr. Dube, expressed his concern:

I'm worried that up to now we have not received adequate materials and resources like teachers' guides, textbooks for learners; we have just a few samples for teachers. Teachers also need to be staff developed on syllabus interpretation and on new learning areas' concepts.

By opening of schools in January 2017 some schools had not yet even received the new Syllabi, which meant teachers were in the dark as to what to plan or focus on for the term. Those schools that had received the syllabi by December 2016 had no textbooks to augment the content covered in the syllabi; therefore it meant resorting to research and dependence on Google for information. The problem with this approach as cited by the teachers was that one never knew how far to go in a topic. Mrs. Mufa, a teacher explained:

I google on most of the concepts but now I don't know whether the information I get is more or less for my grade three class.

The teachers argued that it was either they went too high for the learners or watered down the information to inadequacy. Lack of adequate resources in implementing innovations can cause disruptions in the implementation matrix. Inadequacy in preparation pointed to a glaring gap in the new curriculum diffusion channels. The inadequacy also pointed to a lack of understanding of the implementation process, by the implementers. The implementers, namely teachers, were instead demotivated to implement the new curriculum because of lack of

adequate knowledge, resources and materials. Teachers were therefore faced with this dilemma; on one hand they had to implement the new curriculum as expected and on the other hand they had neither information nor resources to do so effectively. The inadequacy in preparedness and the demotivated state of teachers was likely to interfere with the search for effective implementation strategies. Research in curriculum change implementation has shown that factors such as inadequate knowledge of change, discrepancies in information and resources diffusion have a hampering effect in the implementation process (Makaye, 2014; Nevenglosky et al., 2020; Law, 2022).

4.4.5.2 Use of Resource Personnel

Even the use of resource personnel[1] in certain learning areas like religious beliefs and doctrines, cultural rituals and taboos was proving to be difficult because the resource personnel needed guidelines on the depth of the concepts to be covered in particular grades. The grade three teachers' representative from School B, Mrs. Muza explained:

Even when we enlist resource personnel, we need some guidance for them to follow and tokens of appreciation, our school says there are no funds for such.

The resource personnel also needed to be paid for their knowledge sharing and schools were not in a position to do so as no monies were allocated for this or anything put in place for such.

4.4.5.3Textbooks: Depth of Content Knowledge

Textbooks commensurate with the new syllabi came into schools much later in the term, almost towards closing. The few schools that had dummy samples of textbooks pointed out that the level of content in the concepts was way above the levels of grade threes. Even the vocabulary used therein was above that of 8-9 year olds. For example a topic in Science and Technology

[1] Community members who are custodians of religious and cultural norms and values.

under Diseases detailed the types of germs that is, the bacteria, protozoa, fungi and viruses. Under soil there were detailed descriptions of types of soil like sandy soils, clay soils and loam soils. Teachers felt that this was too advanced for grade threes because this kind of matter was usually introduced in grade seven in the old curriculum. Grade threes were content with knowing that diseases were spread by germs and that soil was where plants grew without the details of the types and the weathering process. Mrs. Munoda a grade three teacher in school A pointed out that under the Jewish religion, all the books in that religion were listed and detailed, not even known by the Jewish children. These were some of the loaded content knowledge cited by teachers, which they strongly felt should be reduced to the level of understanding and cognitive development of grade three learners. The loaded content knowledge reflected a lack of an inclusive consultative partnership with the teachers and learners on the ground by the new curriculum architects hence the overload of concept knowledge on teachers and learners (Phillips & Klein, 2022).

4.4.5.4 Lack of Knowledge of the Rationale

As much as the teachers wanted to implement the new curriculum, most of them were ignorant of the rationale behind the new curriculum framework. A grade three teacher from School C, Mrs. Mayers asked:

What is the reason for the new curriculum? Just to give us more work? No one explained to us anything, we were just told the curriculum has changed so comply

Mrs. Rwendo from the same school added:

We do not even have the new syllabi and neither do we know the structure of the new learning areas and the content therein. So while we wait, we are teaching the old curriculum content.

The few workshops that were carried out did not address the majority of the educators population nor were they very enlightening as to what exactly to be taught, how and why. The

teachers felt that it was more of a directive than an inclusive approach. Failure to understand the reasons for change, insufficient change knowledge and lack of resources to implement the changes can have adverse effects on innovations like the new curriculum, hindering a smooth implementation (Errida and Lotfi, 2021). Given such a setup, teachers were not motivated by the new curriculum hence implementation was stalled.

4.4.5.5 No Feedback

There was also no room for feedback to the policy makers as to what transpired in the workshops. This researcher attended one such workshop as a grade three teacher. Save for officials from the district office and facilitators, there were no representatives from the policy makers or from the Curriculum Development and Technical Services (CDTS) or means of forwarding the discussions to them. It was just a workshop of enlightening each other of the changes and the expectations. Mrs. Pasi, the headmistress of school C posited that it would appear that the Ministry of Education coerced teachers to implement a hastily prepared curriculum which was flawed both in content and implementation matrix, forcing it down to ill prepared schools. There was a loud cry within the education fraternity in the school corridors for extensive consultations especially with them as the implementers so as to make the new curriculum commensurate with what was on the ground. A lack of communication and feedback between the curriculum change architects and implementers compounded the complexity of the new curriculum implementation and hampered the implementation process.

4.4.5.5 Differences in Implementation

Due to the few workshops carried out, there were lots of differences in the implementation process from school to school. Mrs. Tsuro, school B hinted that:

… I only teach what am able to teach in a way I feel relevant and leaving out a lot of concepts I do not understand…

Schools were also required to derive their own school syllabi from the main syllabi as recommended by the Ministry of Education. This scenario led to a selection of concepts which

teachers were conversant with only and leaving out most concepts for a later date when information could be availed. For example, school A's school based syllabi for term one did not include learning areas like Visual and Performing Arts. The teachers claimed they had no idea what Visual and Performing Arts was about and had no guiding resources like textbooks. School B's school based syllabi consisted of the main learning areas like Mathematics, English, Shona, Science and Technology, Heritage, Fareme and Agriculture. School C had not yet designed one. The school – based syllabi differed from school to school and implementation also differed. The lack of expertise by teachers and the expectations by the new curriculum designers compounded the complexity of the new curriculum hence hurdles in the implementation process.

4.4.5.7 Repetition of Concepts

Further scrutiny of the syllabi showed that there was too much repetition of concepts in FAREME, Heritage, Shona and English. For example the same topic on births and marriages was addressed in the four learning areas. The Indigenous Languages Syllabus was crafted in English, making it very difficult to translate concepts into vernaculars like Ndebele, Shona, Tonga, Kalanga, forcing teachers to go back to the old syllabus. Teachers claimed it was very difficult to interpret the intentions of the syllabus and therefore put it aside and taught the languages using the old syllabus. The lack of expertise in syllabi interpretation by teachers drew attention to the inadequacy of information dissemination and complementary resource distribution with the new curriculum dispensation. This deficiency further complicated the knowledge and complexity issues hence impeding the smooth implementation of the new curriculum.

4.4.5.8 A Curriculum that is not inclusive.

The teachers also highlighted that the new curriculum was more political in its approach as it addressed issues to do with Black Zimbabweans and indigenisation, and unfairly leaving out

the other races in the country. Mrs. Mayers, a teacher from School C observed:

Just by going through the grade three syllabi, it seems only Black Zimbabweans and indigenisation issues are emphasized… what about other races?

The teachers claimed that in this era one would expect the new curriculum to embrace everyone in the society and be in line with global trends as the world was now a global village. By not addressing issues that affected other social groupings, namely racial categories in the Zimbabwean community rendered the new curriculum not inclusive, thereby instigating racial divisions and going against its goals of inclusivity, tolerance and appreciation of Zimbabwe's colourful diversity. This rendered the new curriculum less motivating to teachers who were not Black Africans and this could hinder effective implementation.

4.4.5.8 Use of Technology

The teachers also pointed out that the new curriculum recommended the use of information technology as resources yet there were no computers in schools, those that had them, it was in the ratio of 1: 100 learners. An ICT teacher in School A, Ms. Pedzi explained that the number of computers in the school did not match the number of learners in grade three. She explained:

I usually make them share one computer amongst ten when it is absolutely necessary, otherwise they would develop giraffe necks by the end of term in attempting to view the computer from a distance.

Obviously, this has made use of technology, widely recommended in the new curriculum, practically near impossible as the relevant resources like computers were glaringly inadequate. Inadequacy of resources like computers has featured prominently in derailing the implementation of envisaged changes in this discussion.

4.4.5.10 Content Coverage and large classes

Teachers felt that the very broad new curriculum was not practical to implement with the

present teacher – pupil ratio 1:50 on average. They argued that the content in the new learning areas was so much that schools had stretched the academic timetables to 3.30 – 4.00pm. Some grade three teachers highlighted:

Mrs. Rwafa, school A: *Imagine a practical field lesson with my 53 learners? Chances of me losing some of them out there are very high!*

Mrs. Tenzi, school B: *We have now been forced to stretch the academic time-table to 4.00pm for 8 year olds because of too much content. After the lunch hour, it is difficult to make the little ones pay attention.*

This, they claimed, was not commensurate with grade threes' attention span who were now spending almost four hours extra in class; from 7.30am-4.30pm instead of the mandatory six hours. The volume of learning matter, the huge class sizes and long learning/teaching hours were demotivating to both learners and teachers and militated against the foundations of education. It went against the cognitive developmental stages of eight year olds and demoralized the teachers to such an extent that the wholesome implementation of the new curriculum was compromised.

4.4.6 Reasons hindering implementation of the New Curriculum

Some teachers (16.7%) were totally against the new curriculum implementation and they cited the following concerns:

4.4.6.1 New Curriculum Challenges

The educators claimed that the new curriculum was cumbersome, time consuming and not very clear on its goals and objectives. The grade three teachers in school C complained.

Mrs. Rwendo said: *The new curriculum just means more work on our overloaded schedules and more time to cover all this content.*

Mrs. Mayers: *What is the aim of this new curriculum? What are the children expected to do? Re-invent the wheel?*

These were the teachers who neither had adequate new syllabi nor new materials and resources. In short, they had minimal ideas on what had changed and why. For these teachers, it was business as usual in their classes, teaching from the old syllabi curriculum. This here was a classic example of lack of knowledge, in its variations, defeated the entirety of change and halted its implementation. The teachers were not motivated by the unknown and therefore could not implement what they didn't know.

4.4.6.1Resistance To Change

Resistance to curriculum change was evident in this study and it appears in the literature. Due to the concerns cited above, the educators felt it was within their rights and benefitted the learners to ignore the changes for the time being and continue teaching as if nothing had changed. They claimed they would continue resisting until the way forward had been made very clear and relevant. Teachers from school C claimed:

Mrs. Mayers: *For the time being we are still using the old syllabus until our school sources the new one and further information given.*

Mrs Rwendo: *We do not have any information on the new curriculum, we were not even staff developed and our school hasn't sourced the new syllabi and textbooks.* (Mrs. Rwendo)

These teachers were either very ignorant of the new curriculum rationale or just resistant to change. This could be influenced by ignorance of the change rationale and a lack of information and resources. This reflected an importance that change is communicated effectively across all sectors affected by the changes. Lack of knowledge by the implementers negatively affected the implementation process.

4.4.7 A summary analysis of new curriculum responses

On average a good percentage of the educators' population were motivated by the new curriculum as the new norm and way forward in this ever evolving world, which changes were in line with global trends. The support was a good sign that the teachers had knowledge of the new curriculum and would implement it without fail, as it was here to stay, no matter the changes in government politics. Encouragingly, a small percentage was against the ushering in of the new curriculum. Again this was to be expected with human responses, some people tend to say no just for the sake of saying no and being different, but most importantly it was a reflection of lack of change knowledge. Deducing from the few reasons given against the new curriculum, it revealed that some teachers were set in their pedagogic ways and afraid to migrate to a new way and it also highlighted the importance of knowledge, context and complexity of the innovation in motivating personnel.

4.4.8 List of strategies used to implement the new curriculum

In establishing the strategies employed by the schools in an effort to implement the new curriculum, I condensed the strategies gathered from the Heads of schools and the individual grade 3 teachers' interviews and work plans into the following checklist:

STRATEGIES	SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B	SCHOOL C
1. Deployment of senior staff developed teachers into grade 3.	✓ □	✓ □	✓ □
2. Sourcing of new syllabi	✓ □	✓ □	X
3. Devising a school based syllabi	✓ □	✓ □	X
4. Researching on concepts covered	✓ □	✓ □	X
5. Use of Resources Personnel	✓ □	✓ □	X
6. Sourcing of resources And Materials Like	✓ □	✓ □	X

textbooks.			
7. Stretching the academic time-table	✓ □	✓ □	X
8. Reducing content level to grade 3	X	X	X
9. Sourcing of relevant concrete media	✓ □	✓ □	X
10. Conducting Educational tours to Historical Sites, Cultural Centres, religious venues and Science and Technology Institutions.	✓ □	✓	X

Table 4.11: Checklist on implementation strategies

A scan of the checklist in the table reflects that schools A and B were making an effort on strategizing the implementation process. This was a reflection that these schools despite being government schools, made an extra effort to seek knowledge and additional resources like syllabi and sample textbooks to enable them with the implementation and enhance their readiness. The implementation strategies which they came up with were informed by their knowledge and content of the new curriculum. School C on the other hand reflected no attempt in implementing the new curriculum. As discussed in the analysis and discussion section, these teachers were combatively influenced by their lack of knowledge of the new curriculum and were not motivated to seek strategies to implement it.

4.4.9 Discussion on implementation strategies

A discussion of the curriculum implementation strategies will illuminate the comparisons of what obtains on the ground in schools with what is advocated for in theories and literature.

Deployment of senior staff developed teachers into grade 3.

The deployment of senior experienced teachers in the new curriculum classes was consistent

with what theories of curriculum change and management advocate for. Orafi (2013) and Ng Soo (2019) are in concurrence that teachers are the most significant part in curriculum change implementation, undermining their role and influence was tantamount to spelling doom to any innovation. Penuel et al. (2007) and Priestly et al. (2015) added that teachers needed to be intensively developed in the changes for effective implementation. Apparently the three schools' administrators heeded these insights by deploying senior staff developed teachers to introduce the new curriculum in grade three. This assured effective implementation as the teachers were experienced and had been made conversant with the changes. Dennison (2019) and Iskandar (2020) contend that as teachers were the key factors influencing the extent to which the implementation of educational policies and curriculum changes took place as intended, it was important to realize that they needed to acquire skills and knowledge to implement. Without sufficient retraining even those teachers initially enthusiastic about an innovation could become frustrated and turn against it (Marovah et al., 2020). Inadequate staff development was one of the reasons for the mixed reactions to the new curriculum. As much as these teachers wanted to fully implement the new curriculum in grade three, they had insufficient know how on the new syllabi interpretation, content and methodologies to be used as well as insufficient sources of content like textbooks.

Sourcing of new syllabi

As late as in December 2016 most schools had not received the new syllabi for the new curriculum. However, the three schools in the study had made concerted efforts to source the syllabi using their own means and expenses. Mr. Dube, school head of school A explained that:

We are in this better state of having new curriculum syllabi and a few sample textbooks because we had to use our resources to purchase them. The government allocation for syllabi and textbooks will find us half way with work schedules.

Koo (cited in Jalagat, 2016) in agreement with Fullan (cited in Nevenglosky et al., 2020)

pointed out that lack of sufficient and appropriate resources that meet the needs of both teachers and learners had many a time caused failure of effective implementation of innovations. However, it would appear the three schools concerned had so much belief in the new curriculum that they did not want it to fail because of lack of syllabi. Some schools with less concerns waited until the syllabi were availed in January 2017 which caused chaos in the scheming and planning as this was done hurriedly.

Devising school-based syllabi

The new curriculum policy (Curriculum Framework 2015-2022, p. 59) advised and recommended the designing of school based syllabi by extracting from the national syllabi to meet the resources and needs of the school. This meant that schools had to have the national syllabi first before they could devise a school based one. One of the schools in the study, school C, had not bothered to do this, claiming that the new curriculum was not yet clear to them. Since the other schools concerned had sourced the syllabi, that is, schools A and B, by opening of schools in January they were done devising their school based syllabi, scheming and planning. This put the schools in very enviable good positions of implementing the new curriculum with fewer obstacles.

Researching concepts

When schools opened in January 2017 there was not a single textbook on the new curriculum available in schools, save for a few sample copies in some schools. Schools A and B had syllabi and a few sample copies of the main learning areas while school C had nothing, not even the syllabi. This meant that teachers using the new syllabi had to resort to extensive research on the content to teach. Although this caused disparities in content coverage from school to school, it underlined the schools' efforts to forge ahead with the new curriculum despite the challenges. Teachers photocopied the few sample textbooks they had to enable sharing amongst their learners. They also used school internet extensively to research on new concepts. Mrs. Mufa from school A admitted:

I have never used internet so much like now, new curriculum concepts have made me learn quickly how to navigate web sites for correct and approved information.

The new curriculum had enabled teachers to be digitally knowledgeable and they learned new skills and information technology concepts which they previously lacked.

Use of Resource Personnel

The new curriculum syllabi also stipulated the use of resource personnel in new concepts like religious beliefs and practices, cultural rituals and taboos and many others. Although this was challenging as such personnel needed to be paid, schools resorted to relying on their communities and parent boards to supply them with relevant volunteers. In most cases the teachers did the research themselves and discussed their findings with the learners. For example, Mrs. Munoda from school A queried:

Where do I even find the relevant research personnel especially in religious and cultural rituals and taboos? I end up doing research and ask learners to also ask their parents in homework.

Due to uncertainty in content knowledge because of lack of appropriate resources, there was no assurance whether the content knowledge imparted was correct and adequate.

Sourcing of resources and materials

In an effort to implement the new curriculum, the schools had to source relevant new curriculum resources and materials like textbooks and learning media. This also caused problems as available sources in the market were either not syllabi compliant or had scant conceptual information or had information well above the grade three level. Teachers were in a dilemma as to what to do, but as experienced teachers they attempted to find a balanced depth to deliver to the learners. Teachers used the syllabi to guide them in restructuring textbook content knowledge and internet sourced matter to meet the learning levels of their grades.

Stretching the academic time-table

The new curriculum introduced quite a number of new learning areas to be included in the

time-table and the very wide content coverage meant stretching the academic time-table of grade threes to after one o'clock in the afternoon. Some of the schools complied with this in fear of repercussions but pointed out that after one o'clock learners' attentiveness dropped drastically. This issue of time tables and time spent in classes has already been discussed, quoted and analysed in the previous section.

Reducing content knowledge depth

The new curriculum syllabi as a policy document stipulated the content knowledge coverage for each grade. This meant that reducing content knowledge depth to grade three level was out of the question as this would mean going against a given policy. Policies are not moderated, compromised or negotiated but implemented as is. Therefore, schools in this study did not make an attempt to reduce content knowledge depth but instead presented it in small sequential conceptual units for understanding by grade threes, implying that syllabi coverage by end of grade three would not be possible. Policy issues have also been discussed, quoted and analysed in the previous section.

Sourcing of relevant concrete teaching media

New concepts in the new curriculum meant that teachers had to think out of the box in sourcing relevant concrete teaching media for the learners to understand the knowledge concepts. Experienced teachers are generally good at this. As this researcher observed new curriculum classrooms she was awed by the amount of concrete teaching media which the teachers had sourced, sometimes at own expense, to meet the demands of the new curriculum. As expected, not all schools made the effort. Teachers in schools A and B made concerted efforts in sourcing and making learning media like traditional utensils for cooking; clay pots and wooden plates. School C hadn't done anything in this area.

Conducting Educational Tours

For learners engaged in the new curriculum meant that visiting historical sites, cultural centres, religious venues and science and technology institutions as recommended by the syllabi was not an option. Most schools had drafted these tours in their academic calendars and others had actually conducted these tours. However, schools bemoaned the red tape and financial constraints they encountered in conducting these tours. School A had already visited the local institute of agriculture for their crop lessons and school B had toured Great Zimbabwe monuments for their Heritage lessons and School C did not venture anywhere, thus funding and bureaucracy impacts on learning opportunities.

4.5 Summary on implementation strategies

As can be deduced from the above check list, most schools were making an effort to comply and meet the demands of the new curriculum by making sure those senior teachers who had attended the new curriculum workshops were deployed in the new curriculum grades. This was all in addition to having to achieve RBM targets in classes. Schools had stretched their financial budgets to source relevant materials and resources which responded to the new curriculum content among other strategies. It was also impressive to note that schools had made plans to visit places recommended in the new curriculum for the learners to have a practical learning experience about the historical and scientific concepts they now learnt about in classes like weather stations, agriculture institutes and Great Zimbabwe monuments. This positivity was reflective of the teachers' motivation and knowledge of the new curriculum, which had propelled them to seek effective implementation strategies. The effective implementation of the new curriculum translated into improved learners' performance. Learners were engaged in new learning experiences designed to improve their overall grasp of knowledge concepts through practical and hands on experiences.

However, as evidenced by the responses from schools, not all schools and teachers were making an effort. Teachers in School C had adopted the watching and waiting attitude which

is generally regressive to change. They adopted this stance because of lack of content knowledge as they had neither syllabi nor textbooks. Some schools like school C did so out of sheer ignorance, lack of finances and initiative, but change was inevitable and there was no room of avoiding it.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has summarily presented and discussed the schools' strategies of improving learners' performance and of implementing the new curriculum. The general views of the teachers with regards to RBM and the new curriculum have also been presented and the reasons for their different standpoints discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the study findings on the strategies for raising learner performance, against the RBM policy and the new curriculum implementation by linking the findings to the literature. The study's objectives were to establish primary schools' efforts in Kwekwe to raise academic performance against the backdrop of the results-based management approach and new curriculum implementation (in grade 3) which are currently manifesting in Zimbabwean schools. The focus was therefore to establish the strategies which schools had to put in place to improve and maintain their good academic results. In this pursuit, the study also sought to establish the views and understanding of results-based management and the new curriculum by the teachers as they endeavored to implement and achieve their desired goal of improving or maintaining high performance in assessments. Consequently, the findings became multi-pronged in four dimensions, that is, the RBM and raising learners' academic performance embedded in the new curriculum and the strategies of implementation. The findings were informed by the participants' interpretations of their reality as teachers.

Academic performance improvement strategies for learners implemented by teachers were heavily influenced and driven by the teachers' understanding and acknowledgement of RBM in the schools. The study established that RBM motivated the teachers who encouraged the learners to achieve and reach the pass rate targets stipulated by RBM in anticipation of the rewards offered to teachers for their efforts. The teachers' motivation to employ specific academic improvement strategies in expectation of rewards was consistent with Vroom's theory of expectancy motivation. Vroom reasoned that employees (teachers) put more effort into their work when they expected or knew that they would be rewarded for their efforts

(Stimpson & Farquhason, 2010; Gordon, 2022). The study established that the teachers were motivated by the policy of RBM to raise their learners' performance because they perceived RBM as a legitimate measure of assuring tangible service delivery, it set plausible pass rate targets for the teachers, However it pressurised both teachers and learners to continue to increase their efforts because high performance was embedded in rewards: in remuneration, job security and recognition through positive recommendations in teachers' curriculum vitae (CV). The reasons forwarded by the teachers for their positive views on RBM were consistent with their 'expectancy motivational' state (Gordon, 2022). Both Vroom's expectancy motivation and Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theories prescribe a state of high worker motivation and commitment to achieve set goals when expectations, set goalss, rewards, job security and promotions were assured (Alshmemri et al., 2017; Nickerson, 2021).

However, contrary to these theories, the study findings revealed that RBM propelled teachers to become mechanical in their teaching focus and assessment obsessed due to the constant pressure by the Ministry of Education and school management to improve learners' performance; thus the focus was on learning **from assessments and learning for assessments** not aligned to the outcomes of a quality education, that is to achieve the wholesome development of the learner. Another finding from the study was that instead of being motivated by RBM, the teachers used it to garner additional work in the community with financial rewards by undertaking extra lessons. These comprised weekend lessons and holiday lessons and these lessons were promptly paid for to the teacher by the parents who aimed to have their children acquire the best results so they could be accepted in a highly ranked high school. The result of summer/ holiday schools and weekend lessons was that learners did not experience any holidays or time to rest.

5.1.1 Academic performance improvement strategies for learners

The study established that teachers in all three schools were motivated by RBM to keep abreast

with global trends of academic performance improvement strategies that were used both locally and abroad and attempts are making learning environments conducive to high quality teaching but all had strategies that are deeply assessment embedded for the production of good results.

Quality teaching strategies

Schools participating in the study employed the following strategic pathways that ensured quality teaching:

Deployment of senior qualified teachers in exit grades (grade sevens).

Team teaching, where subject competent teachers to co-teach with the grade seven teachers on particular subject concepts.

Sourcing and using resources and materials that enhance improved pass rates like revision textbooks, past exam papers and exam papers from Zimsake elearning website for exams, resources, question papers, answers and study materials.

Daily Extensive quality homework monitored by parents and guardians and projects by learners to complement content knowledge learned in class.

The above efforts were a marriage between learners, teachers and their parents/ guardians. Schools also employed the following academic performance improvement strategies to raise learners' performance:

Extra lessons in the afternoons and on weekends for syllabus completion and recapitulation of concepts.

Holiday/Vacation schooling focusing on revision of content knowledge and application tasks.

Enforcement of a wide reading culture.

Weekly assessments, namely tests under exam conditions to gauge the level of learners'

performance under stress and to distill the content areas needing revision.

Remedial instruction for 'at-risk' learners.

The study established that primary schools specifically in Kwekwe Urban District, in Zimbabwe, worked tirelessly to raise learners' performance towards achieving academic excellence in their schools. Schools had put in place strategies such as early morning revision sessions, vacation schooling, holiday camps, extra afternoon lessons, intensive remediation activities, collaborations with parents and guardians through extensive homework and projects, sourcing of enabling resources and materials and the deployment of highly experienced and self- motivated teachers to teach and guide learners for the national examination. The strategies were consistent and matched with the global trends on what excelling schools were implementing to improve and maintain academic excellence abroad (McKinsey, 2007, Young et al., 2014; Lynch, 2019). Jalbani (2014) reiterated that effective teaching strategies such extensive homework and research projects impacted positively on learners' performance and learning outcomes. The strategies used by participating schools were paralleled with those gleaned from literature in chapter four, (see checklist table 10). The study revealed the use of morning work, extra lessons and holiday camps as innovative strategies used by participating schools.

5.1.2 Impacts and outcomes of learner improvement strategies

The study established that the learner improvement strategies impacted positively on the overall learners' performance as evidenced by the improved pass rates, improvements in learners' abilities and skills in problem solving in mathematics and sciences, reading and comprehension in languages, logical narration of events in story writing and debating and a wider knowledge of learnt concepts. Head teachers and grade seven class teachers of the three participating schools were unanimous that the use of the learner performance strategies which they employed

had improved and increased their schools' rating and class performance rates which translated to good results.

5.1.3 The School's Organisational Culture

The enforcement of learner performance improving strategies was found to be as a result of the schools' organizational culture as was also found in previous studies (Teasley, 2017; Smith & Beckham, 2019). The schools that participated in this study had similar organizational cultures in that the head of schools, as government representatives, enforced a results culture in the schools which was prescribed by the RBM (Vahamaki, 2019). The teachers viewed themselves as policy-bound civil servants who were obliged to facilitate the assessment culture at school by seeking out and preparing and then implementing learner performance improvement strategies that resonated with their schools' identities, context and results orientation. These assessment biased strategies were discussed in schools' staff development sessions and agreed upon by both school management and all teachers. Teasley (2017) and Smith and Beckham (2019) also acknowledged that schools' organizational cultures were the reason for their success in the achievement of goals as these cultures provided a sense of identity, promoted an orientation towards achievement and created specific ways of achieving the desired standards.

However, the study findings also revealed that the use of RBM ratings for the schools' ethos and organizational culture had negative repercussions in that the assessment thrust meant that aspects like knowledge development were no longer the focal point. Teachers were instead using assessment to teach concepts haphazardly without continuity, systematic sequencing, and progression in the lessons. The pursuit of high academic learner performance as encouraged by RBM was found to be unsatisfactory in that some improvements in performance also went unacknowledged because those improvements had not reached the school and RBM target. Teachers in the study reiterated that their learners do have variable strengths and weaknesses; with some less academically endowed than others, therefore demanding a uniform high learner

performance threshold was unfair to their efforts to improve and over ambitious of RBM. The findings also revealed that most of the learner performance improvement strategies like revision of past papers, extra lessons, holiday lessons and holiday camps were actually assessment biased and resulted in work overload. Teachers and learners were engrossed in and obsessed with assessments without progressively developing conceptual knowledge during lessons. The neglect of non-examinable subjects such as Home Economics and Physical Education pointed to this anomaly as well. Assessment was not being used as a summative evaluation tool after teaching a theme. Teachers were basing their lessons on the previous assessments and teaching concepts from the examination papers.

Learner performance improving strategies found obtaining in schools were also consistent with those used by excelling schools in the region and globally. Strategies such as holiday schooling, extensive homework, assessments, remediation and research projects matched with those obtaining in effective schools (McKinsey, 2007; AIS Communique, 2017; Fitchett & Hearfner, 2018). Participating schools also put into use emerging innovative strategies that they were testing for effect such as holiday camps and extra afternoon lessons which have had success in improving learners' performance (Garira et al., 2019). The use of learner improvement strategies to raise learners' performance were also in line with performance improvement theory that concerns itself with measurable performance in results-oriented systems by enforcing knowledge, capability and motive (Elger, 2006; Richey et al., 2011; Millillin et al., 2021). This is because these strategies prompted teachers to upskill their pedagogical knowledge to be in a pivotal position for imparting vital content and conceptual knowledge to the learners. Elger's performance theory recommends the use of effective strategies, recruitment and capacitation of teachers and rewarding with motivators like incentives as the conditions necessary for enhancing learner performance improvement. However, this study also established that because of RBM pressure, teachers were using assessment to teach

concepts instead of teaching then assessing either formatively or summatively. This approach caused an erosion of the curriculum as there was no progression and continuity of the curriculum with progressive development of concepts and themes. The study further established that teachers in schools A and B were capacitated as they didn't lack adequate teaching and learning materials and resources like infrastructure, textbooks, computers and access to the internet to achieve the expected high learner performance that would come from disadvantaged schools like school C. Teachers in disadvantaged schools reasoned that their achievements could never be compared to the ease that more advantaged schools would be able to attain in RBM targets. It was also revealed that the incentives from the government for achieving high learner performance were sometimes viewed by teachers as not worth their efforts.

5.1.4 Teacher quality and learner performance improvement strategies.

Extracting from the performance improvement theory (Elger, 2006) and in addition to the RBM motivation, the quality of teachers in the participating schools was also a contributory factor in the positive impact of learner performance improvement strategies. The study confirmed that the grade seven examination classes in the three participating schools were manned by quality teachers. Teachers in these schools were found to be quality teachers whose quality was defined by their high qualifications, seniority in the service (experience), commitment to their craft evidenced by their keen interest in researching on innovative teaching methods that catered for different learning styles and abilities, implementing new learner performance improvement strategies and doing extra lessons and holiday schooling. The teachers also understood that their colleagues in the school were also sources of reference that could be emulated. This was reflected by the schools' emphasis on periodic staff development seminars on innovative and emerging teaching methods, learner performance improvement strategies and on the need to co-teach with seasoned specialists especially in the exit examination classes. These teacher

attributes were consistent with ideals of raising learners' performance as recommended in literature that teacher quality was the most significant factor in doing so (Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Penuel et al., 2007; Priestly et al., 2015; Lightfoot et al., 2018; Porter, 2020). The study findings also revealed that some of the teachers, in school C in particular, were driven more by intrinsic motivation, the desire to perfect their professional pedagogy, satisfy that inner gratification of success and feed their self-esteem and not the regulatory RBM.

5.1.5 Lessons learnt on achieving high learner academic performance

The study established that in order to achieve credible academic results, schools needed to:

- Use data and research-informed learner performance improvement strategies (Hattie, 2012; AIS Communique, 2017; Fitchett and Hearfner, 2018).
- Deploy quality teachers in examination writing classes (Barber and Mourshed, 2007; Lightfoot et al., 2018; Dennison, 2019).
- Motivate teachers with worthy incentives, high rating scores and appreciation was paramount in enhancing success (Khun-Inkeeree et al., 2022).
- Enforce a results culture that is promoted by a properly implemented RBM system (Vahamaki, 2019).
- Avail adequate and updated teaching and learning resources like textbooks, laptops and access to internet to facilitate smooth implementation of learner performance improvement strategies.

5.1.6 Understanding the RBM

This section discusses the main findings on the effects of the RBM system on schools and teachers' efforts to raise learners' performance. It should be noted and re-emphasised that RBM is a policy matter that impact on all grades and teachers in primary schools, more so the grade seven national examination writing classes, who become the default face of RBM.

5.1.7 Refining RBM

The study established that in as much as most teachers understood and appreciated the rationale behind the RBM, they still felt that the approach needed extensive refining to make it more applicable to the education sector. In as much as the RBM motivated teachers to improve the academic performance of their learners, it failed in providing a suitable linkage from the amount of effort to the outcome. This relationship is presented in a linear manner in expectancy motivation theory (Stimpson and Farquhason, 2010) but the relationship between effort and outcome is iterative, that is there are multiple efforts which lead to the outcome. Indeed RBM is a system with an industrial bias (Vahamaki, 2018) that does not easily lend itself to the demands of education in schools where teachers will teach a topic and may have to repeat the lesson and further revise sections of the topic not well understood by learners in order to optimize learning. The study findings revealed that RBM applied in these three schools was not ideal as it did not factor in the nature of teaching and learning which was influenced by various factors: the varied intellectual abilities of learners, the varied school settings and contexts and the match between learners' efforts and incentives provided.

The expectancy motivation theory prescribed a linkage between effort and performance, and between performance and outcome and between outcome and motivation state. The reasoning, according to Gordon (2022), was that this linkage meant that employees believed that an increase in effort led directly to performance improvement and therefore an expectancy of valued rewards for their efforts. However, in the education sector, as evidenced in this study, the situation on the ground was more complex. The effort-performance-outcome-motivation state linkage was compromised in the education system because application of effort aimed at learners did not always produce similar performance improvement as it would with raw materials in industry. And when it did, the expected valued rewards were usually not

forthcoming or teachers believed were not worth the efforts they had invested. In the final linkage of outcomes-motivation state, some teachers became demotivated instead.

5.1.8 Demands and expectations of RBM in education

The study established that RBM demanded measurable service delivery outcomes by setting targets on pass rates for schools and individual classes. RBM also expected a total compliance in meeting set targets in stipulated time frames of term, mid-year and end of year pass rate percentages. RBM demands and expectations including the paperwork involved made it far from user-friendly for human deliberations, as well as application in the classroom context. For instance, the RBM demands outside of education, is a results culture in organisations and it expects quality products and performance at every departmental level (Mundondo et al., 2019). In as much as the results culture could be incorporated in schools as organisations, the production of quality results at every grade level became complex to achieve because the school context is different from industry: learners and teachers are not all uniform and production is not on a conveyer belt with 'quality products and performance' as in industry. The RBM system also demanded the setting of targets and expectations of meeting of those targets in set times (Pazvakavambwa, 2015). This was problematic in the education sector, with learners and teachers as humans migrating to other schools or being transferred or passing away, making the meeting of targets set in the beginning of year or term at times, difficult to meet within the set time frames. Madhekeni (2012) noted that the RBM demanded mastery of performance measurement that was informed by performance information. However, according to a survey by Mundondo et al. (2019), the role players: the heads of schools, departments and teachers were clueless on what performance information was.

In this study, the heads of schools and teachers who participated unanimously contended that the RBM needed an updated version and that there hadn't been any follow ups; monitoring and evaluations since the days of the launch in 2005, save for a few circulars as reminders to

compute ED4 forms and forward them to the District Offices. This lack of feedback, monitoring and evaluation had rendered the RBM ineffective and not customized to the contextual factors of the education system. In questioning the possibility of implementing RBM in the civil service, Mundondo et al. (2019) confirmed that the weakest link of the RBM system was that there were no regular reviews, updates, feedback, monitoring and evaluation which are very important during the implementation of a system as these features enable making adjustments, refinements and adaptations of the modalities. The lack of a communication channel between the schools as implementers of the RBM system and the policy makers in the ministry of education meant that the schools were unable to communicate and provide feedback on the implementation challenges they were encountering.

This study' findings in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe established that because schools did not have similar organizational structures as their industrial counterparts, the RBM system became compromised in implementation as improvisations had to be made to its technical aspects in order to make it relatable to measuring learners' achievements as opposed to numbers of products. Schools also lacked the technical and behavioural acumen in working with performance information and measuring performance found in industrial or corporate sectors. In similar vein, Mayne (2007) and Mundondo et al. (2019) concurred that organizational, behavioural and technical factors in the public service in most developing countries were not in sync with the RBM system and the latter also alluded to RBM in Zimbabwe being unsustainable. Surprisingly, even in the industrial sector, Vahamaki (2018, p. 19) indicated that the RBM evaluation in development co-operations highlighted a plethora of challenges which included a lack of guidance or understanding within organisations of what RBM was and why they were doing it, structural and systems issues, capacity constraints and costs, measurement and method issues, lack of results culture and ownership and harmonization issues. In the education sector, this study established that in as much as schools and teachers had an idea

what RBM was about and the reasons for implementation, the school structures and management systems which were quite different from the industrial sector, made the linear implementation of performance targets ponderous and circular; teachers kept on computing voluminous forms and mark schedules repeatedly. The RBM was dictated to the education sector for the reasons discussed in background and literature review, for that reason schools and teachers in this study presented a ***lack of ownership*** as they believed they were not consulted nor involved in the crafting stages and thus felt isolated from its creation. This was reflected by their passive implementation of the RBM system and lamentations on their lack of choice in policy issues.

5.1.9 An unsustainable Focus on academic results

The concerns raised were that the RBM approach tended to focus more on academic results instead of the holistic nature of the teaching and learning process. Non-examinable subjects like PE, Art, Music and Home Economics were either left out or traded in for more academic time. This also put academic pressure on learners who had no time to relax, exercise and play. Chiziwa & Kunkwenzu (2022) ascertained that excessive levels of academic pressure can cause physical problems like obesity and psychological problems like extreme levels of stress and this could lead to a decline in their physical and mental health. This decline in turn can adversely affect academic results (Psychology Magazine, 2023). The claims were that the results approach reduced teaching to a testing and a drilling exercise of content concepts. The teachers claimed that was why the education system produced learners who had memorised how to respond to examination questions on concepts they understood little about and with no idea on how to put them into practice in their daily encounters in life. This was also given as a reason why Zimbabwe has so many academic graduates roaming the streets with absolutely nothing to do or any idea on how they can make a living or contribute to society because all they did was to pass exams. This study finding points to the use of assessment as a teaching

tool. Assessment was not used for tracking individual learners' progress in conceptual knowledge acquisition so that adjustments in teaching approaches could be made to align with learners' progress (formative assessment) (Mutch, 2012). Assessment is also used for summative evaluations for a class' progress and the effectiveness of the teacher's pedagogical instruction. In a broader sense, assessment can also be used to determine the sustainability of educational reforms (Mutch, 2012; Simper et al., 2022). The use of assessment so deeply embedded, was unsustainable.

The performance improvement theory and ways of achieving improved learners' performance discussed in literature review underpinned a holistic approach to the overall improvement of learners in a conducive learning environment, not just a focus on passing examinations but of being able to acquire and apply knowledge gained. By contrast, the results focus of the RBM claims by the teachers indicated a lack of guidance and an understanding by organisations of the RBM components and the purposes of assessments. The RBM determinants of performance also include behavioural factors such change of behavior induced by learnt skills in classrooms, sports fields and arts (Mayne, 2007; Vahamaki, 2018; Mundondo et al., 2019).

5.2 Unfair measurement tool

The study found that the RBM was heavily criticized by the teachers due to its lack of sensitivity to human abilities. The teachers in the study claimed the RBM arguably treated human beings like raw materials in the manufacturing industry with expectations of production outputs regardless of the conditions and context. It has been asserted that teachers and learners' efforts cannot be measured with the same yardstick because human beings differ in abilities, aptitudes, interests, moods and intellect (Young et al., 2014; Ritchie & Tucker-Drob, 2018). Theories of motivation, performance improvement and learning also emphasize the pivotal role played by the learning context, the learners and teachers' abilities as well as the availability of resources and materials in enhancing realistic outcomes. While the teachers acknowledged that

the RBM approach motivated them to be more proactive and research oriented to widen their knowledge base facilitating the achievement of good results in their individual classes, they raised concerns that it was unfair to measure their quality teaching and dedication to service delivery by the class pass rate.

The reasons provided by teachers were that individual learners were endowed with varying intellectual abilities as well as learning disabilities which made it near impossible to attain a respectable pass rate despite the efforts put. An earlier educational psychology study, from a cognitive perspective (Cherry, 2021) indicated that learners learn as a result of their memories and intrinsic motivation, implying that a low intelligence quotient could lead to slow learning. Recent studies by Ritchie and Tucker-Drob (2018) give evidence in support that an additional year of education correlated with an average increase of 3.394 IQ points. This means that an extra year of schooling does actually increase and improve learners' intelligence. This, however, does not vindicate RBM as the appropriate measuring tool.

5.2.1 The high teacher-pupil ratio

The study established that the high teacher / pupil ratio obtaining in Zimbabwe's primary schools also reduced and limited close monitoring of 'at-risk' learners on a daily basis. Teachers from participating schools raised their concerns on this issue of learner support as well. For example, school A grade seven classes had 48-50 learners per teacher, school B 50-55 learners per teacher and school C, an independent school, had 25-30 learners per teacher. The teachers in the study gave evidence that these very large ratios had rendered the remediation of at-risk learners almost impossible to implement. The remediation and variation approaches alluded to in the literature, namely the differentiated instruction approach and the meta-variation approach (Ismajli & Imani-Morina, 2018; Shareefa et al., 2019) advocated for an individualized educational strategy of instruction which was not practical in a class of 50-60 learners. Wadesango et al. (2017) indicated that large class sizes were not conducive to cater to learners' individual differences. Dube (2016) in her research on the impact of high teacher-pupil ratios on primary school learners' achievements confirmed that evidence indicated that an increase in the teacher-pupil ratio led to a decrease in percentage pass rates in most primary school classes and a negative impact on learners' performance. Low teacher pupil ratios have been

found to be beneficial in all academic and behavioural areas for both learners and teachers Vander (cited in Dube, 2016). School C in this study fared much better and benefitted from low ratios hence its learners received optimum individual attention, boosting their performance improvement to higher percentages.

5.2.3 The crisis of expectations

The study established that teachers were disgruntled by the RBM's unequal rewarding system. The teachers gave evidence that industrial workers were rewarded more than them even after obtaining similar rating scores in similar employee grades. The teachers in this study lamented that their efforts at keeping the academic pass rate high was not realistically appreciated in terms of incentives or monetary values, they claimed that at one point they were offered plastic dishes and some certificates for achieving a 100% pass rate. The expectancy motivation theory underlined the crucial role of reward expectations by employees able to deliver expected service but the incentives proffered by the officials in the education sector were inconsequential compared to those offered to their counterparts in the industrial sector after a turnaround production of goods. Teachers from School C fared better in that in addition to the not so worthy prizes offered by the ministry, their school SDC chipped in. In that regard, Bester (2012) and Mundondo et al. (2019) reiterated that the RBM involved behavior change and therefore there should be incentives tailored to the context of the organization and more importantly, incentives need not only be financial as non-financial ones could be equally powerful. It can be argued therefore that appropriate incentives can have a positive effect on performance improvement in the education sector.

5.2.4 Participants' perceptions on RBM favourites

Primary schools in Zimbabwe, in Kwekwe urban district in particular, were found crafting strategies of raising learners' performance in an effort to meet the demands and targets set by

the RBM and new curriculum mandates. The study established that schools and teachers appreciated that RBM had positive features which included:

1. Being a motivator to raise performance above set target percentages.
2. Being a legitimate measure of assuring service delivery is done in accordance to the ministry policies, guidelines and expectations.
3. Keeping administrators, teachers and learners active in meeting and surpass set targets.
4. Challenging schools and teachers to keep abreast with innovative global trends and strategies of raising learners' performance.
5. Rewarding schools, teachers and even learners who excel with financial and non-monetary incentives.

Teachers in this study acknowledged that the RBM motivated them to surpass set targets and employ strategies that ensured learners' improved performance. This was in tandem with Vroom's expectancy motivation theory and Herzberg's two factor theory of motivators which prescribed that motivated employees yielded expected results. Theoretically therefore it could be argued that motivated teachers would seek and put into use effective strategies to raise the performance percentages of their learners. On the other hand the findings revealed that it could be also argued that the constant RBM pressure can lead to teacher burnout due to assessment obsession as discussed earlier. Therefore, teachers would not be motivated but pressured and trapped in the high performance web.

The study findings further revealed that RBM could also be argued to have brought diligence in the previously lackluster attitudes of school administrators and teachers, since they did not have to account for results. This was evidenced by the administrators on constant checks of what went on in classrooms and seeking solutions to encountered problems. Administrators needed to do this periodically in order to rate teachers. The teachers themselves had been turned into astute researchers as they were always on the alert on what strategies of improving

learners' performance were obtaining regionally and globally. Teachers were eager to sharpen their instructional methodologies through staff development sessions and consultations with subject specialists in order to improve their learners' performance. All these measures were the result of the RBM impact. Arguably therefore, teachers need a system like the RBM to upscale their professionalism.

5.2.5 Participants' perceptions on RBM adversities

Some teachers in the study indicated their dissatisfaction with the expected achievement rewards proffered by the ministry, sometimes as little as a certificate of achievement and a plastic bucket. The RBM reward mechanism system apparently does not have set rewards for achievement: in numerical cash values or in kind. What it is clear on is the above 80% pass rate as the rewardable threshold. In expectancy motivation, the argument was that individuals were motivated to complete targets because of the expected rewards proffered after quality production. In this study schools and teachers produced requisite results as per RBM stipulations but the rewards proffered were not worthy their efforts. In theory this militating against the teachers' beliefs and expectations of satisfactory and valuable rewards rendered them dispassionate in engaging in demanding and effective learner performance improvement strategies. On that note, the study established that the RBM had some adverse effects for the education system in that:

1. The RBM was too industry aligned and therefore measured human efforts in a clinical way like raw materials in a manufacturing factory (the complexity), without taking into consideration the human factors like learners' abilities, aptitudes and intelligence (the context) in the production of good results.

2. The RBM was also too results focused without considering the availability of conducive infrastructure, resources, materials and even personnel (the context) needed in achieving targeted results.

3. The RBM by its definition and description (the knowledge) turned teachers into results seekers, coercing them to coach learners on how to respond to examination questions without teaching them the concepts' baselines. This has caused a state of drilling, cramming and cheating in the classrooms. Sadly, superficial learning was being promoted at the expense of deep learning.

4. The paperwork and red tape involved in RBM (the implementation) had turned teachers into clerks at the expense of teaching time and the rewards proffered thereafter were not worth the effort and time taken.

In theory therefore, in as much as RBM has been hailed as a motivator for schools and teachers to raise learners' performance, it had overly been viewed as an unnecessary evil meant to dictate how to raise learners' performance to teachers who were well aware of their roles and goals and who trusted their training. Administrators had also worsened the situation by using RBM as a tool to intimidate and victimise teachers into unquestioning submission and working beyond the call of duty. Schools and teachers had strived to produce the target results as per expectations by any means possible and some bordering on outright cheating and disregarding of teaching fundamentals. For instance, the drilling of past examination papers and examination questions promoted superficial learning of memorizing for examinations at the expense of deep learning in which learners link their learning to real life situations.

5.2.6 The demand and supply dimension of RBM

In this study the commercial theory of demand and supply was validated by the RBM. By demanding good results from schools, RBM had left teachers with no choice but to deliver the good results as expected. The desire to put their schools high up on the table of academic achievement motivated teachers to be innovative in the application of effective strategies even though some were not effective such as cramming. Of late, schools which participated in this study have devised a system of holiday camp where schools in the same cluster group their

learners according to abilities and then use referenced subjects experts to assist and prepare learners in revising for exams. Each group is then paced according to their abilities. The innovative holiday camp has been hailed by stakeholders as an effective strategy for accelerating achievement of good results. All these efforts are due to RBM expectations. The aim of the schools had shifted from achieving set target percentages to actually achieving 100% pass rate, in which no learner should fail. Were it not for the RBM, it is doubtful if schools would have made all these efforts although teachers could be self -motivated on the other hand.

5.2.7 The RBM panacea

This study confirmed that the RBM debates in school corridors had manifested both positive and negatives attributes. Since the RBM was a matter of policy which could not be discarded, teachers consented that a working solution or middle ground had to be established. From the findings, it can be argued that:

- The RBM is a legitimate measure on the quality of schools and teachers as evidenced by the improved learner performances.
- The RBM is a necessary evil that assures quality service delivery and accountability in schools and classrooms. The theoretical implications therefore are that the RBM has to be maintained in schools with the following considerations:
- That all schools, heads of schools and teachers are conversant on how the system works.
- That it becomes an integral part of the overall schools and staff management systems, managing by results should be in the schools' organizational culture.

When all deliberations concerning the RBM are made transparently and everyone concerned is aware of their roles and role expectations, the system can function favourably and yield expected results, results that are wholesome, not just focused towards one dimension.

5.2.8 The new curriculum implementation strategies

This section discusses the findings on the new curriculum implementation strategies and their impact on learners' performance which was an addition to the RBM policy. Grade 3 teachers were being impacted upon by dual pressures of a new curriculum and RBM. The study established that most schools had put in place strategies for implementing and coping with the new curriculum changes in response to the ministerial directive. These strategies included:

Deployment and staff development strategies, for example deployment of senior experienced teachers to grade three classes and staff developing them on syllabi interpretation and research methods for new concepts.

Resource sourcing, for example sourcing at own expense the relevant materials and resources to complement the new syllabi demands like textbooks and worksheets and use of conversant resource personnel on religious and heritage concepts.

Projects and Educational Tours, for example grade three classes engaged on projects on new concepts for a wider understanding as well as educational tours to historical, cultural and scientific sites to fill the knowledge and practical gaps in the learners.

5.2.9 Impacts of the new curriculum for learner performance improvement

The study established that the new curriculum had brought in a complete new dimension in defining learners' performance. Learners were expected to be assessed in terms of competences in their abilities to apply knowledge, skills and attitudes in an independent, practical and responsible way (Curriculum Framework, 2015-2022) in addition to RBM assessments -tests and written examinations. Thus the grade three teachers faced a double-edged sword of achieving RBM targets and implementing the new curriculum with its competency-based assessment dimension. However, at the time of this study's field work, April 2017, the new curriculum had just been introduced into schools that January therefore its impact on learners' performance was not as yet realized but envisaged. The focus of this study at the time was on

the implementation process; specifically how the schools and teachers grappled with the implementation matrix of a change in curriculum. This was in response of the then permanent secretary in the ministry of primary and secondary education Dr Utete-Masango who had granted the permission to carry out this study on condition that an assessment on the new curriculum implementation was included.

5.3 The new curriculum implementation concerns

The study's findings were that the new curriculum implementation was a complex process presenting change management dilemmas and a nightmare in terms of sourcing resources like syllabi, textbooks, personnel and computers. Schools and the grade three teachers (who pioneered the new curriculum in addition to RBM) were in constant panic mode because on one hand they had to find effective strategies of implementing the new curriculum and on the other hand they faced a host of challenges like unavailability of the new syllabi, complementary textbooks and other materials commensurate with the new curriculum. In instances where the syllabi were availed, a dilemma in syllabi interpretation was another challenge because of the depth of new content knowledge therein.

From the observations by Peretomode and Ikoya (2010), Mpepereki (2019) and Chinangure and Chindanya (2019) curriculum change is a complex process and successfully managing and implementing the curriculum change is even a more complex undertaking. In this study curriculum change complexity was presented in the forms of cultural and context diversity, political and ideological stances, and to some extent religious undertones as well as stakeholders' idealism. All these perspectives have to be taken into cognizance in planning and implementing curriculum changes. Peretomode and Ikoya (2010) argued that underestimating the cultural and context matrix in curriculum change planning and management can present inertia among curriculum implementers. Mpepereki (2019) pointed out that political and ideological standpoints of a country have an influential impact on curriculum change, and when these change, so does the curriculum. Chinangure and Chindanya (2019) added that

stakeholders, who include captains of industry, educationists, politicians, religious leaders, parents and guardians, have their ideal curriculum to be implemented and these ideals were not always in tandem. All these citations point to the complexity of curriculum changes experienced by schools and teachers in this study.

Another finding of this study was the ***resistance to change*** by some teachers like those of school C. These teachers argued that there was no clear mandate to change the curriculum and they had neither new syllabi nor textbooks. In explaining resistance to change, Dhlomo and Mawere (2020) pointed out that when changes were imminent, change implementers had a tendency to be conservative and resistant to change. To counteract this effect, Ngwenya (2019) suggested modifications of those aspects that could cause resistance while maintaining the change ideals. This study established that while most schools and the majority of teachers welcomed the long overdue curriculum changes, there were worrisome concerns raised. The raised concerns were the sudden directive to implement the changes without adequate knowledge, resources and materials necessitating the changes put in place, the level of content to be taught per grade level, the keeping of exit profiles versus the school reports and the high teacher/pupil ratio came up again. The study revealed that the raised concerns were a result of the failure of the ministry of education and local officials to unpack the new curriculum at grassroots level: for schools and teachers. Professional capacity development of teachers did not unfold prior to the roll out of a new curriculum and once again, teachers did not feel that they had ownership of this new reform, similar to their feelings about RBM.

5.3.1 Directive to implement

The study established that the directive to implement the new curriculum came as a surprise to most teachers who were not aware or ready for the curriculum changes. The reasons cited by the teachers were that the new curriculum was thrust upon them without first in-service training on the new knowledge, skills and resources required to fully implement it.

Among the issues discussed in curriculum change management and factors influencing implementation of curriculum innovations in literature review was the issue of implementers' involvement, mutual consensus and ownership of the changes (Orafi, 2013; Alsubaie, 2016; Errida and Lotfi, 2021). Many curriculum changes and innovations had failed not because they were flawed in principle and implementation but because the implementers were given directives or orders to implement a change or an innovation they viewed as foreign, not of their making and unnecessary (Ng Soo, 2019; Phillips and Klein, 2022). However, when the implementers were involved in the crafting of the changes and their contributions and concerns considered, they subsequently felt they were part of the changes, they owned the changes hence they would implement faithfully. When implementers were given directives to implement, they tended to resist by citing assumed and sometimes genuine reasons of their resistance. In this study, teachers indicated their lack of change ownership by citing the directive aspect, inadequate resources and materials as the reasons for not being fully committed to implementing the new curriculum. This was their way of rejecting an educational reform they felt alienated from.

5.3.2 Lack of Knowledge of the rationale

Another finding established by the study was the ignorance by the main agents of change- the teachers, of the rationale behind the change and the new syllabi interpretation and the concepts therein. Interactions with the grade three teachers from the participating schools evidenced this glaring anomaly. Studies by Fullan (2006), Schmoker (2011), Orafi (2013), Ng Soo (2019) and others discussed in literature review emphasised the need to empower the implementers with knowledge of the rationale behind the changes, knowledge of the nature of the changes and knowledge about the contents and interpretations of the guidelines of the changes. Once the implementers were equipped with a sound knowledge base, implementation became smooth and automatic, but lack of this fundamental knowledge often led to paying lip service to the

desired changes.

5.3.3 Depth of Content Knowledge

One of the findings was the wide and high level concepts to be covered by 7-8 year olds in a day, week, term and year. Many teachers were concerned about this aspect and questioned on how they were expected to maneuver all that. Authors like Sahlberg (2006), Fullan (2006), Jalagat (2016), Walker and Caprar (2019) and Nevenglosky et al. (2020) among others reviewed in literature, highlighted the importance of the changes and innovations to respond to the needs and context of those it is intended for. Complexity of change content as highlighted by the grade three teachers was also underlined as a cause of failure of changes. Implementers tended to be comfortable implementing changes they were conversant with and that were within the comprehension scope of their learners as depicted by the teachers' concerns.

5.3.4 The high Teacher-Pupil Ratio

The high teacher/ pupil ratio not surprisingly came up again in new curriculum implementation findings with the grade three teachers. It was also established that it made the implementation of the new curriculum concepts practically impossible as these were mainly hands on. The teachers lamented their failure to cope under such a heavy load of sometimes between 50-60 learners per teacher. This high ratio was definitely not conducive to effective learning given the hands-on approach encouraged by the new curriculum. For emphasis, Wadesango et al. (2017) stressed that large class sizes had a detrimental effect on individual monitoring and supervision, distribution and sharing of learning resources like textbooks and consequently on effective curriculum implementation.

5.3.5 The exit profiles dilemma

Learner exit profiles describe the acquired knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and attributes that a learner should possess as a result of their learning experience (Curriculum Framework,

2015-2022, p. 17). These learner exit profiles are a new concept in primary schools and as such pose a new learning experience for teachers. Learner exit profiles are also part of the competency based assessment, the written aspect part. This means teachers have to seek knowledge on how to design, remark and report on the individual learner exit profile in a manner that is vastly different from the traditional termly class report. In essence, the new curriculum demands the acquisition of these new skills set and knowledge from teachers which they can gain through robust research and consultations with expert report writers. However, study findings revealed that designing, keeping and computing of exit profiles for individual learners as recommended by the new curriculum was established by the study as problematic, too detailed and cumbersome. The teachers were uninformed as to whether the exit profiles were meant to replace the traditional termly school reports or an addition to these. As it is there was no clear blue print on how the exit profiles should be handled, carried over to the next grade and when a learner transferred. Brauer (2021) acknowledges that there is an obvious and urgent need for teachers' in-service training on the competence-oriented processes and the paradigmatic change across education systems.

5.3.6 The need for moderations

The study established that there were a number of alterations/ amendments needed on the new curriculum. Parts of the new curriculum like the syllabi coverage on grade levels needed to be revisited so that they were made context and age relevant. Errida and Lotfi (2021) posit that one of the determinants of the success of curriculum change is its relevance, appropriateness and context sensitivity. Change management theories and curriculum innovation blueprints uphold that moderation of changes to suit the context and needs of the intended is paramount for any successful adoption (Nevenglosky et al., 2020).

5.3.7 The new curriculum implementation strategies

The study established that the ushering in of the new curriculum had also motivated schools and teachers to improve their pedagogical approaches, expand their knowledge base and apply effective implementation strategies with the objective of improving and advancing their learners' academic prowess to be in tandem with global trends of education. The following were the main strategies established in implementing the new curriculum:

- Research approaches for classroom instruction
- Use of resource personnel from the community
- Reducing content knowledge to grade three level of cognitive development
- Conducting educational tours to places of learning like museums, historical sites, weather stations.

The new curriculum had turned teachers into full time researchers. They spent more time researching on new concepts in their grade syllabi, thereby learning new matter on a daily basis. This new learning also cascaded into changing the teaching methods. Teachers found themselves researching on how best to teach new concepts. Even the use of resource personnel required teachers to first discuss and plan the lesson together, thereby gaining new knowledge on concepts they previously knew very little or nothing about. Reducing researched content to grade level requires certain levels of competence, which teachers are slowly acquiring because of the demands of the new curriculum. Conducting educational tours does not happen haphazardly, it takes planning, researching on the learning values of the intended places and liaising of the personnel of those sites or institutions. All this new learning means teachers are evolving with new knowledge and skills, ushering in a refreshed breed of teachers capable of competing favourably with their counterparts in economic and technologically advanced settings.

The new curriculum bias towards the 21st century international standards in Science,

Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) has left schools and teachers in particular with no choice but to implement the new curriculum as planned. No school would want to deprive its learners of the opportunity to be part of the global community by denying them the new curriculum learning experiences. With that in mind, schools and teachers in schools A and B in particular have made paradigm shifts on:

Pedagogical Approaches

The new curriculum shift from content knowledge to critical skills and competencies (Curriculum Framework, 2015-2022, p. iv) as learner exit attributes translated into pedagogical and curricular shifts as well. Hence teachers, specifically those in this study had to adopt and practice teaching approaches aligned to the new perspective. For instance, teachers in this study used research and project approaches, engagement of resource personnel and educational tours. The new curriculum therefore motivated them to think outside the box in their instructional repertoire and not only use direct instruction, explanation and questioning of learners.

Expanding Knowledge Base

The curricular shifts in the new curriculum compelled teachers in this study to research on new concepts and by so doing they expanded their knowledge base. Hence the new curriculum motivated teachers to be research enthusiastic.

5.3.8 Dynamism of Education

The study findings proffered insights into the dynamism of education. Education as a social entity is dynamic (Zindi, 2018). The new curriculum therefore translates this dynamism by modernising the education system in line with new technologies and knowledge that aim to produce employment creators as opposed to employment seekers (Curriculum Framework, 2015-2022, p. 11). Given this perspective, schools and teachers have been compelled to be dynamic as well and implement the new curriculum lest they become left behind. In theory, the implication is that a plausible new dispensation motivates implementation.

In summary, when a new curriculum is introduced, implementers will either play along (lip-service), ignore or reject completely or implement effectively depending on how the new curriculum is planned and introduced, whether the new curriculum meets the needs and context of the users, the availability of resources, materials and personnel and most importantly the knowledge and skills base of the implementers. The study findings challenged the curriculum implementers to be sensitive to schools settings and context, the cultural diversities, political and ideological stances and stakeholders' idealism when planning a new curriculum. Findings on resistance to implementing the new curriculum also pointed to the failure to adequately unpack the innovation to schools and teachers. Deductively it can be concluded that there is a gaping need for developing capacity and unpacking a curriculum that is sensitive and responds to the raised issues.

5.3.9 New learning with the new curriculum

The new curriculum has also brought in new concepts, new methodologies and new behaviours. Some of these are:

5.3.9.1 Visual and Performing Arts

The new curriculum has also introduced Visual and Performing Arts syllabi inclusive of music, theatre, film and dance because of the realization that not all learners were academically inclined. The Visual and Performing Arts goals are to promote and encourage learners thus gifted to pursue these areas as their learning pathways. It has been proven that visual and performing arts can be rewarding financially, socially and in self-actualisation (Chifunyise, 2019). For a long time, schools in Zimbabwe had been battling with what to do with learners who were talented and gifted in visual and performing arts (Chifunyise, 2019). Now they have been given a leeway by the new curriculum to begin exposing learners in these areas as early as Early Childhood Development (ECD). The concern here was that the present graduated teachers as articulated by teachers who participated in this study, were not fluent in

visual and performing arts content and skills, but that should not deter implementation as they could be up-skilled through Visual and Performing Arts seminars. Meanwhile schools in this study were outsourcing personnel in this area to assist teachers. In theory it is evident that teachers will strive to implement innovations, especially if they are matters of policy and beneficial to the learners. They also will passively implement innovations which they understand little of because of their employment obligations.

5.3.9.2 Competency-based assessments

The new curriculum has also shifted from being examination based to competency based, thereby focusing on the ability of learners to apply knowledge, skills and attitudes in an independent, practical and responsible manner (Curriculum Framework, 2015-2022, p. 4). For example the world now needs entrepreneurs, creators of employment, inventors and consultants and there is no better avenue than that proffered by the new curriculum (Chinangure & Chindanya, 2019). Schools and teachers as parts of the global village have therefore been motivated to implement the new curriculum with the objective of producing globally functional individuals. Teachers therefore need to learn how to competence assess their learners. This is a paradigm shift for the teachers, from the old examination papers setting and administration to the new competency-based assessment. Creating these shifts in the way things were done and new learning without supporting modalities of capacitating teachers, providing complementing resources and materials was an oversight from the curriculum planners. It instead created discord, disparities, disenchantment and disdain in new curriculum implementation.

5.4 The new curriculum difficulties

It has been asserted that without careful and continuous attention to implementation strategies, planned changes in curriculum rarely succeed as intended (Sahlberg, 2006; Fullan, 2009; Zhu, 2017; Howson & Kingsbury, 2021). The new curriculum in Zimbabwe is no exception to this

rule. Schools and teachers have demonstrated demotivation to implement the new curriculum because of the following concerns:

1.The manner in which the new curriculum was ushered in, more of frog-marching schools and teachers to implement without clear understanding of the conceptual framework of the content to be implemented and a very complicated implementation matrix.

2. The contradictions, disparities and inconsistencies in the distribution of resources, materials, personnel and even the rationale have caused challenges in the implementation process.

3. The lack of an open two way communication channel between the implementers (schools and teachers) and the new curriculum architects has stalled the implementation process as the implementers have no avenues to channel the challenges that they are encountering.

4. Insufficient and not very intensive professional development sessions have necessitated deployment of teachers who have no clue of the changes into the new learning areas and new curriculum classes. This has caused havoc in the smooth implementation of the new curriculum as such teachers eventually resort to the old curriculum.

The new curriculum demotivating concerns give evidence that when changes are not carefully planned and communicated, implementation of such changes is usually met with a plethora of challenges. This study established that teachers in school C had not embarked on the new curriculum and one of the reasons was that they felt alienated from the educational reform as they were neither consulted nor supplied with new curriculum syllabi and textbooks.

5.4.1 Curriculum change management

Curriculum change management is one of the theories debated in literature review in resonance with curriculum changes in Zimbabwean primary schools. Interactions with schools and teachers directed to implement the new curriculum necessitated theorising on curriculum change management. Managing curriculum changes hinge on curriculum change theories

(Fullan, 2006; Orafi, 2013; Alsubaie, 2016; Errida & Lotfi, 2021; Phillips & Klein, 2022) which emphasize:

1. Treating curriculum changes as a learning process for both schools and teachers and therefore the new knowledge rationale, re-conceptualisation of the content, the shift in methodologies and goals should be communicated for effective change management. In this study this was not the case, inadequate information on the new curriculum was disseminated and schools and teachers had to make efforts to source the new syllabi and complementary instructional materials like textbooks. Teachers had to be resourceful in finding relevant teaching content and methodologies. Therefore the new curriculum was draining process for information and materials gathering.

2. The manner in which the changes happen. The intended changes should be a consensus between the change designers and the change agents. The change agents as implementers should be involved right from the drawing board (planning) stage of the changes for effective implementation. Involving implementers facilitates ownership of changes and equips them with vital change knowledge and skills. Imposed and dictated changes are usually paid lip- service to and are likely to fail to take off. This study established that this was done sporadically, schools A and B had received some consultations about the new curriculum whilst school C knew nothing about it hence they had not begun the implementation process as they felt alienated from the reform.

3. That change should take into cognisance the context, availability of resources and materials that facilitate changes. Lack of enabling environments and conditions usually cause failure of changes. This study established that this was a glaring anomaly in schools and grades supposed to pioneer the new curriculum; they had to fumble along with minimal resources and materials. The new curriculum was therefore not responsive to the specific spatial context of the schools and teachers.

4. The fundamental realisation that change involves grappling with new beliefs, skills and behaviours, therefore challenges and obstacles are to be anticipated and ways of addressing them should be put in place. Implementers need to be equipped with change management knowledge. In this study teachers could not report their challenges or raise their concerns. A two-way communication channel was not immediately availed by then. This led to discrepancies and differences in implementing the new curriculum among the schools in the same district.

The responses from the teachers engaged in new curriculum implementation indicated that the four curriculum change management principles were overlooked hence the demotivating concerns raised in the above sub-heading. The theoretical implication therefore is that when curriculum change is lacking in holistic participation and poorly communicated, this could lead to passive implementation as established in the study findings.

5.4.2 New curriculum implementation influencers

Factors influencing the new curriculum implementation were interrogated in the literature review section as they had a bearing on the study's new curriculum implementation objective. The responses of the study's participants also drew attention to these factors. The implementation of new curricula hinges on the following influencing factors:

1. The perspectives or approaches underlying the adoption of a new curriculum proposed by Koo (2009), later reiterated by Kogabayev and Maziliauskas (2017) and Tomislav (2019) lean on fidelity, mutualism and enactment. These approaches are discussed in detail in the literature review and they determine the effective implementation of new curriculum on the basis of the faith and belief that the new curricula will be implemented as intended. The implementers are accorded the opportunity to make modifications and adjustments in accordance with their needs and objectives as dictated by their contexts and experiences. The baseline to be noted is the

modifications and adjustments done by the implementers as being the crucial aspects of effective new curriculum implementation. In this study teachers made modifications and adjustments to the new curriculum concepts, not because they were afforded the opportunity but as a coping mechanism for implementing the new curriculum. They had to work with what they had and what they knew, the rest was left out. The new curriculum was therefore not implemented as intended or planned as schools selected what they were able to work with. This was the result of an inadequacy of communication and dissemination of the new curriculum by the curriculum development (CDTS) officials.

2. Characteristics of change. According to Snyder et al. (1992), Orafi (2013) and Tomislav (2019), the characteristics of change include the nature and relevance of change, the clarity, complexity, quality and practicality of the curriculum changes. When each characteristic has been accounted for by both planners and implementers there is no reason for implementation to fail. In this study a failure of new curriculum take off was established in school C because the characteristics of change were not accounted for.

3. The local characteristics which according to Koo (cited in Jalagat, 2016) are made up of school, district, community, the Board, the school principal and the teacher orientation characteristics. New curricula implementation can be affected by these characteristics either positively or negatively depending on how the issues therein are negotiated (Phillips & Klein, 2022). This study established that head teachers and individual teachers' attitudes towards the new curriculum influenced the extent to which they implemented it. Schools A and B had positive attitudes hence they embarked on implementation whilst school C's teachers did not. The study also established that the teachers' qualifications, seniority and experiences were an added advantage in negotiating new curriculum implementation strategies.

4. The external factors described by Koo (cited in Jalagat, 2016) include the government and other organisations' influences on the new curricula can also impede or increase the

implementation rate. This study established that the curriculum development unit (CDU)'s inadequate consultations, communication and diffusion of the new curriculum was the cause of the disparities and inertia in implementation by the schools.

5. Professional development factors. According to Penuel et al. (2007), Lightfoot et al. (2018) and Molloy (2019), these deal with the issues of how teachers have been staff developed in new curricula knowledge, skills and methodology. In this study this was not done adequately, only a few grade three teachers were partially staff developed. Teachers in the study grappled with syllabus interpretation, depth of textbook content knowledge and extended time tables.

These factors as discussed in detail in literature review highlight the influences on the implementation of new curricula as far as teachers, learners, events, context and resources are concerned. However, these curriculum variables were not given due considerations as deduced from the participants' responses. It is poignant therefore to theorise that the new curriculum in Zimbabwean primary schools was meeting with mixed reservations and negativity because in the planning and diffusion stages of the new curricula these factors and variables were not seriously considered. In reality this means back to the drawing for the curriculum planners, to craft a curriculum that is responsive and sensitive to the issues of concern raised by the study findings otherwise the new curriculum will face an uphill struggle in implementation.

5.4.3 Gaps in the new curriculum: Lessons learnt

The study also established that there was quite a lot that still needed to be done for the complete overhaul of the old curriculum to allow the smooth ushering in of the new curriculum. This included changing of mind sets of staff, revising some parts of the new curriculum that is puzzling and ambiguous and mostly producing and distributing resources, materials and personnel relevant to the new curriculum.

Changing mind sets

It was evident that there was need for changing the mindsets of teachers; to enable the

implementers an opportunity to be open minded to the new curriculum. This was evidenced by some teachers' resistance to change and reliance on the old syllabi as their teaching reference. As noted from Salhberg (2006) at the beginning of this discussion new curriculum implementation involved grappling with new beliefs, understanding new skills and behaviours which could prove overwhelming to some implementers unless they were made to buy-in gradually. Kirby (2019) in agreement with Marope (2018) contend that to effectively build capacity, changes, including mindsets, needed to occur simultaneously; pedagogically, behaviourally and organizationally. Ideally, mindsets could be reset by acquisition of new knowledge, knowledge is powerful.

Revision of some parts of the new curriculum

As discussed earlier, educators evaluated that some parts of the grade three syllabi and content depth needed moderation to be age appropriate.

Production and distribution of resources, materials and personnel

Heads of schools and grade three teachers unanimously cited the unavailability of teaching and learning resources and materials for the new curriculum as well as personnel for new learning areas like Visual and Performing Arts. Ng Soo (2019) and Ngwenya (2019) highlighted that teaching/ learning resources and relevant personnel could make or break a new curriculum. The schools participating in the study were all in dire need of both teaching/learning and human resources as highlighted in their responses.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the study's findings by linking it with the available scholarship. The findings on learner performance improvement and new curriculum implementation strategies were deduced from analysis of the data. The findings on the teachers' understandings and influence of RBM and the new curriculum on their professional deliberations were also discussed. The next chapter theorizes on the insights gained from these findings.

CHAPTER SIX

THEORISATION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter theorizes on insights derived from key findings related to the phenomenon.

The study aimed at establishing strategies of raising learner performance by primary schools and used by teachers in Zimbabwe's Kwekwe urban district against the backdrop of results-based management (RBM) and the new curriculum policy (mandated by the government to the education ministry). The findings revealed some valuable insights for RBM and the new curriculum which is generative of new theoretical concepts and new knowledge for research: most importantly was the instrumental value of teaching as opposed to the intrinsic with repercussions for maintaining a balanced curriculum. There was also maladaptive teaching which resulted from an obsession with assessment as a result of school ratings and the monetary benefits for teachers. There were also contextual deficiencies which were illuminated in aligning teaching and learning to the specific spatial context of schools which resulted in challenges for teachers and calls for contextual school justice.

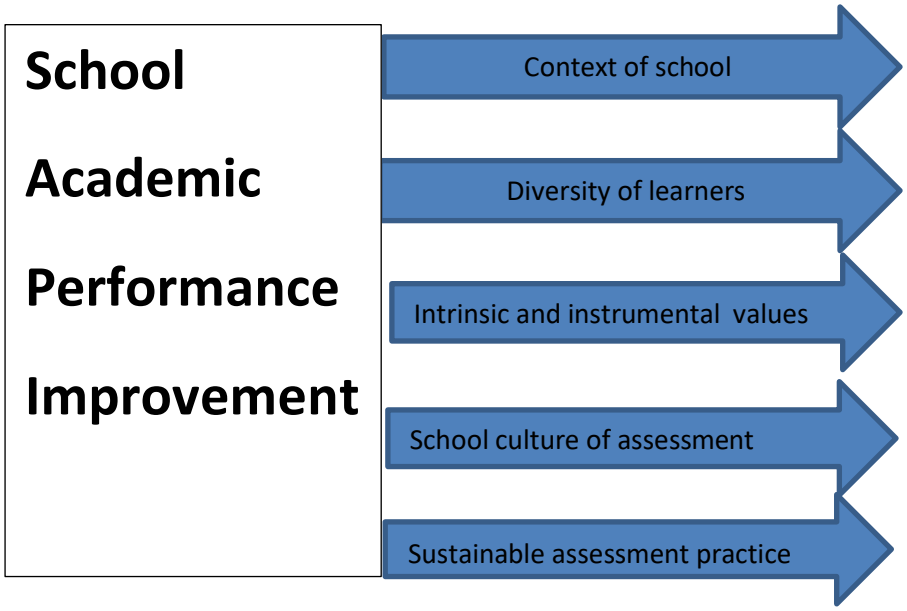

Figure 6:1 School Academic Performance Improvement

6.1.1 The dictates of the Specific Context of the School

The study findings pointed to a lack of adequate professional development and insufficient engagement in communicating reform (RBM and the new curriculum) and aligning RBM to teaching in specific spatial contexts of the schools. Thus teachers resorted to maladaptive teaching such as teaching from past examination papers from grade five onwards to grade seven using assessments to teach concepts. The extra lessons were also steeped in assessments to prepare learners towards achieving RBM targets. ***Maladaptive teaching*** in this context refers to teachers using assessment as the start and focal point of lessons to achieve the desired high performance results. This was occurring without teaching for continuity of the phenomenon; the concepts in a theme were not taught progressively, and sequentially to develop learners' cognitive growth systematically, before resorting to any formative or summative assessments. This approach led to haphazard teaching of content knowledge, thereby causing an erosion of the format and depth in the curriculum and depriving learners of meaningful academic growth. The findings also revealed that RBM had negative repercussions in that, in its demand for high learner performance, it pitted school against school and teacher against teacher: for the learners to gain access to the best high school and for the teacher's rating and school ranking. RBM did not give due consideration to the diverse school settings in that each school context had a different set of advantages and disadvantages and as such RBM was unfair for teachers in disadvantaged schools. For example, school A compared less favourably to schools B and C in terms of: access to learner resources such as computer laboratories for internet access for research projects, adequate and quality textbooks and a favourable teacher/pupil ratio. The school context dictated the availability of resources for effective teaching and learning. Teachers in less affluent schools like A and B reasoned that their achievements could never be compared to the ease with which schools in affluent areas were able to access resources and attain RBM targets. Teachers also bemoaned RBM's insensitivity to the nature of teaching and learning especially with regards to learners' strengths and weaknesses. The literature reveals

that learners have variable strengths and weaknesses; some learners will reach different cognitive levels before others and some may take longer to reach the targeted performance improvement prescribed by RBM. Teachers felt discouraged and demotivated by the lack of acknowledgement embedded in the RBM policy which doesn't recognize some improvements in learner performance because those improvements do not reach the minimum RBM thresholds.

6.1.2 Promotion of instrumental values

In line with the lack of acknowledgement of diverse school settings and varied learner abilities, the study's findings revealed that RBM promoted instrumental rather than any intrinsic values in teaching and learning. Instrumental value is defined by Kumar (2017) and Gatley (2021) as that value with an extrinsic quality, when something is valued for the end results gained from it. In teaching, instrumental values promoted by RBM translated to teachers teaching for high learner performance which results in high school ratings and monetary rewards for teachers. Intrinsic value on the other hand is when something is valued for its own sake (Kumar, 2017; Gatley, 2021). In education terms, intrinsic values are described in abstract concepts like intellect, wisdom and knowledge (Kumar, 2017). This is when teachers teach to impart knowledge to the learners and to satisfy that inner gratification of increasing learners' knowledge and understanding of concepts and phenomena. Learners also learn for the love of learning while gaining knowledge at the same time. The study findings established that ***RBM had promoted purely instrumental values*** in that teachers had become ***results driven***, completely obsessed with assessment to the extent that most learner performance improvement strategies were a relentless revision of test papers, extra, weekend and holiday lessons were assessment focused sessions, there was very little if no enjoyment attached to lessons and the learning of concepts or phenomena. Teachers were prompted by RBM to use assessment to teach concepts and further knowledge instead of building lessons around the teaching of key concepts and knowledge then progressing onwards towards formative and summative learner

assessments. Thus, it appeared to be 'the cart before the horse' situation that unfolded due to RBM. The focus was on ***learning from and for assessment*** instead on ***learning with assessment*** weaved into the lessons. It was only about getting good results and being on a table of high performance, an instrumental outcome rather than having learners enjoy learning, something more intrinsic. The assessment obsession went against teaching and learning fundamentals; those of continuity and developing concept knowledge progressively and sequentially. Instead of producing learners with sound knowledge acquisition and building blocks, this assessment framework of teaching produced learners with high test scores who had mastered examinations only. However, both instrumental and intrinsic values are important in teaching and learning because education is not only important for its end value but also for its own sake (Kumar, 2017; Gatley, 2021). A balance between the values was lacking.

6.1.3 A Framework of Redress for RBM & the new Curriculum

The exclusion of RBM mandates to acknowledge the need for equity and cater for specific spatial categories of school context and admit to the diversity of schools and learners as well as the promotion of instrumental values over intrinsic values calls for a framework of redress and one that is derived and appropriated from environmental justice. Environmental justice is the fair treatment and involvement of all people in their diversity and context against environmental good and harm (Environmental Protection Agency-EPA, 2023). The environmental justice tenets of recognitional, procedural and distributional justice puts emphasis on fairness, diversity, equality and equity (Svarstad et al., 2011; Ramirez-Andreotta, 2019; Pickup, 2022) which resonate and guide the framework of redress for RBM in education. Manik and Ekelund (2023) add compensatory justice as a critical caveat once environmental harm has been experienced. I have drawn on environmental justice because the school environment where RBM and the new curriculum are unfolding differ across many schools even in rural Kwekwe, yet the schools are being tasked to comply and adhere to the same targets for RBM and the new curriculum.

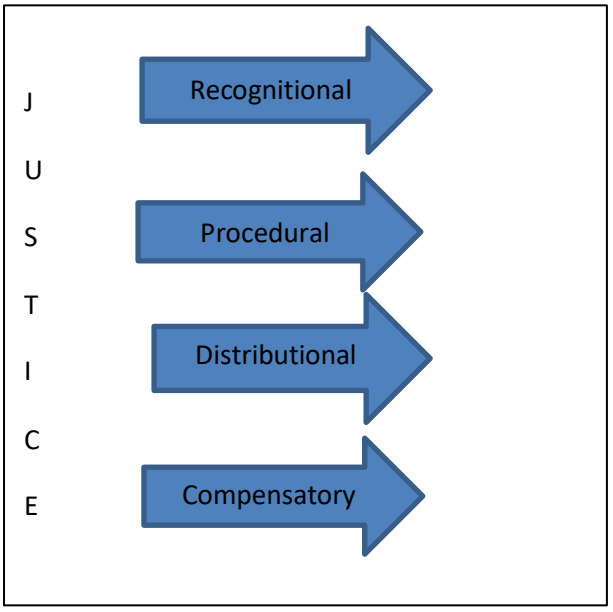

Figure 6:2 Framework for School Justice

6.1.4 Recognitional Justice

Recognitional justice in environmental justice demands that public policy should be based on respect and recognition of all people in their diversity and diverse context (Ramirez-Andreotta, 2019; Pickup, 2022). Appropriating recognitional justice to RBM and education means that the recognition of schools and learners' diversity should be paramount in formulating curriculum changes and implementing policies like the RBM. Diversity in school contexts implies that in RBM ratings, cognizance of the school context should be factored in when rating the school; there should be aspects of resources and school infrastructure that affect curriculum implementation being factored into the school and teacher ratings for fairness and justice. Diversity in learners means recognizing, respecting and welcoming learners' different backgrounds, identities, abilities and experiences (Watts, 2022, p. 3). The study findings have confirmed that teachers recognized the cognitive differences amongst their learners and realized that RBM did not consider this, thus RBM was not inclusive in celebrating learners' cognitive differences and their uniqueness (Watts, 2022; Cerna, 2023). It has been suggested

that policy makers need to understand how education systems are governed, resourced and monitored to ensure they reflect the needs of all learners and schools (Cerna, 2023). To achieve this, the RBM policy will need to lend itself to inclusive education tenets. Inclusivity ensures that every member of that diverse community is nurtured, celebrated and included within the school community (Ireri et al., 2020). RBM can develop and incorporate measures that ensure that all learners are afforded high quality education in a nurturing and inclusive environment where they can all thrive, progress and fulfil their potential (Watts, 2022; Cerna, 2023). On new curriculum implementation recognitional justice means recognizing teachers as the key stakeholders in the piloting and implementation process of the curriculum after researching teachers' views of what is required in a new curriculum. This was apparently absent with the last curriculum.

6.1.5 Procedural Justice

Procedural justice in environmental framework which refers to the fairness of the process of decision-making through the participation of the affected to be informed, express their opinions and influence decisions (Svarstad et al., 2011; Ramirez-Andreotta, 2019; Pickup, 2022). It demands the rights of the affected at every level of decision making including a needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation (Ramirez-Andreotta, 2019; Pickup, 2022). Drawing from the definition and demand of procedural justice and extrapolating it to RBM and the new curriculum, means that once there is recognition of diversity in school context and of learners, the need to create different procedures in accommodating diversity is a logical plan of action. This plan of action should include the participation, opinions and suggestions from diverse schools and it should incorporate measures that address the needs of diverse learners.

The ministry of education can as an option, authorise individual schools to develop and design home grown RBM procedures that respond to their context and to the needs of their learners. Incidentally, basic educational frameworks do mandate schools to adopt, design and implement

strategies that support inclusivity where every learner is encouraged to retain their uniqueness with a sense of belonging and being valued (Ireri et al., 2020). In addition, procedures to professionally develop teachers in preparation for a new curriculum before implementation is a key requirement for successful curriculum reform, as is monitoring and researching teachers' experiences of the new curriculum for constructive feedback to the ministry for refinement.

6.1.6 Distributive Justice

In environmental terms distributive justice refers to equal distribution of social and economic benefits and burdens amongst relevant parties according to their contributions to the situation and their needs (Svarstad et al., 2011; Pickup, 2022; EPA 2023). Translating to RBM and the curriculum, this means distributing resources both human, infrastructural and materials that can enhance learner performance according to learners' needs and diversity concerns in context. Schools and teachers should also be rated according to their contributions to their specific learners and their learners' improvement based on progress from their previous cognitive level and not targeted academic thresholds. Equality and equity should be embedded in RBM and the new curriculum implementation for relevance to school's contexts so teachers do not become demoralised. Equality means that schools, teachers and learners receive the same fair treatment and access to opportunities from educational policies while equity recognizes that schools and learners have different circumstances which require varying levels of support to take full advantage of equal opportunities (Watts, 2022; Cerna, 2023).

6.1.7 Compensatory Justice

In environmental justice, the concept of compensatory justice is viewed as a victim-centred method of neutralizing injustice (Page & Heyward, 2017, Ramirez-Andriotta, 2019). It protects the rights of victims of environmental injustice to receive full compensation and reparations for damages (Ramirez-Andriotta, 2019; Pickup, 2022). In education, the definition can translate to compensating schools due to the challenges they have in comparison to other schools . These challenges may include a challenging school context like learners' poverty, a lack of resources

such as computer laboratories, large class sizes and more learners with special educational needs. Compensation can therefore be in the form of funding for resources like computers, textbooks and assistive devices like hearing aids, large print texts, crutches and wheelchairs for learners with learning needs depending on the needs. Funding models also need to be planned with the clear aim of promoting equity and inclusion; that includes regular and targeted funding for where the need is (Ramirez-Andreotta, 2019; Cerna, 2023).

6.2 Schools' Organisational Assessment Culture

In the study, findings on assessment were prominent on strategies of raising learners' performance against the backdrop of RBM and new curriculum. Participants revealed an organisational culture of assessment obsession at the three schools in the study. This organisational culture was enforced by the teachers who used learner performance improvement strategies like lessons that were assessment centred from the beginning of the lesson. The findings established that focus was on ***learning from and for assessment*** . Teachers used assessment such as a question in an exam paper at the beginning of a lesson, to teach conceptual knowledge instead of teaching the concept, ensuring learners' understanding of it, and then progressing to assessment. This was reflective of a different orientation to the purposes of assessment. It is argued that an organisational culture focused on assessment should be embodied by an understanding of assessment processes and practices, a commitment to continuous improvement through consistent, systematic and purposeful use of assessment (Fuller &Skidmore, 2016; Simper et al., 2022). It was evident that teachers capitulated to using previous assessments as a teaching tool in response to the pressure upon them to produce high learner performance improvement scores by the Ministry of Education and school management. The high performance improvement scores were demanded in accordance to the regulatory RBM set targets. It is on the basis of this fundamental finding that a schools' organisational assessment culture has to be theorised on as a means of redressing the assessment conundrum. The definition, types, purposes and goals of assessment have been

gleaned from a study on developing a sustainable assessment culture in New Zealand schools (Mutch, 2016). I also draw on a sustainable assessment culture because the schools in the study were implementing an unsustainable assessment culture.

6.2.1 The Meaning of Assessment

Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering evidence of what learners know, understand and can do (Simper et al., 2022). It is a result of the interaction between teaching and learning and involves the focused and timely gathering, analysis, interpretation and use of information that provides evidence of learner progress (Mutch, 2012, p. 374). In short, assessment evaluates learners' progress (Staake, 2023). These definitions point to the learner's acquisition of conceptual knowledge through a teaching- learning process as the first step. The schools in the study negated this by using previous assessments as a teaching tool on which to base lessons and this deprived learners of continuity in learning, having a sequenced and progressive conceptual knowledge building blocks. The ideal is for teachers to use assessment information that has been gathered and analysed to ascertain what learners have learned, what they were taught or whether teachers' instruction was suited to the learners' needs and interest (Mutch, 2012; Simper et al., 2022). Effective assessment is planned and communicated, it involves and benefits the learners and it supports teaching and learning goals (Mutch, 2012). There was a relentless extraction of past exam and test papers for lessons, this was observed in extra, weekend and holiday lessons without teachers' recapping of conceptual knowledge or re-teaching segments from the curriculum or ascertaining learners' knowledge through formative assessments.

6.2.2 Achieving Assessment Sustainability

According to Mutch (2012), assessment sustainability can be achieved at teacher level, school level and at community or national level but for the purposes of this study, I hone in on teachers and the school level.

6.2.2.1 Teacher Level

Assessment sustainability (Mutch, 2012, p. 381) at teacher level can be achieved by reframing teaching as an ongoing inquiry such as:

- Focusing inquiry – establishing baselines and direction basing on where learners are in content knowledge acquisition.
- Teaching inquiry – using evidence from research and practice to design teaching and learning experiences that enable learners achieve the intended objectives.
- Learning inquiry – investigating the success of teaching basing on the assessment results.

Deductively it shows that achieving assessment sustainability at teacher level incorporates all three purposes of assessment: improvement, accountability and sustainability (Mutch, 2012, p. 381).

6.2.2.3 School Level

Assessment sustainability at school level can be achieved through:

- The school's own self-evaluation using summative evaluation information.
- The school using learners' learning assessment as the hub of both self-review and external review processes.

Assessment sustainability at school level contributes vital information and provides evidence for making judgments about the quality of learners' learning and how governance, leadership, teaching, the school culture and community engagement contribute in providing quality education to all learners (Mutch, 2012, p. 381).

6.2.3 Challenges and Redress measures on new curriculum implementation

There are several measures to redress the curriculum implementation challenges.

Challenges	Redress Measures
Directive to implement change	Consult and involve teachers in planning
Resistance to implement change	Modify resistance triggering aspects
Ignorance of change rationale and syllabus interpretation	Empower teachers with knowledge on change rationale and syllabus interpretation through staff development seminars.
Textbook content knowledge Depth	Upskill teachers with modalities of delivering such depths
	Employ more teachers per grade level
High teacher/pupil ratios	Decentralize resource distribution or authorize schools to initiate ways of resourcing themselves through SDCs.
Inadequate/lack of teaching and learning resources and materials	

Table 6.1: Challenges and redress

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a theorization framework derived from insights in the literature, findings, data generation and analysis in the study in relation to key phenomena. This study concluded that in establishing primary schools' efforts to raise learners' academic performance, a myriad of issues related to RBM and new curriculum concerns, in addition to a results focus can lead to maladaptive teaching and both effective and non-effective instruction strategies. The study established the various efforts made by schools and teachers to raise learners' academic performance and implement the new curriculum, the challenges they encountered and the mitigating measures they employed to circumnavigate the challenges. The next and last chapter presents the study's recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER SEVEN
RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the recommendations of the study regarding the learner performance improvement strategies, the RBM, and the new curriculum implementation blueprints.

7.1.1 Learner Performance Improvement Strategies

Primary schools in Zimbabwe employ a wide-range of instructional approaches that are either teacher-centred or learner-centred in their pursuit of raising learners' performance. One of the approaches is the project-based approach. However, this study established that the project-based learning approach has not been used extensively and rigorously in primary schools; its use has been tentative or used as a summary of a topic concept at the end. This study recommends the project-based approach to be a greater core of instructional strategies in the primary schools because of the teachers' success with it and narratives from abroad such as from the United States Elementary schools experiences. The George Lucas Foundation launched and experimented with the project-based learning approach on various levels of educational institutions in the United States. The resultant findings were that the project- learning approach assured a vast improvement in attainment test scores, reading and understanding of subject-specific concepts. This was because the project-based approach is a hands-on, learner-centred and differentiated instructional pedagogy which appeals to the modern humanitarian thinking (McDowell, 2023). Here in Zimbabwe, Hapanyengwi et al. (2019, p. 12) conducted a study on the quality of education in Zimbabwe and one of their findings was that active, child-centred learning is positively related to learning outcomes that include academic performance in literacy and numeracy as well as life skills.

Project-based learning is explained by Schuetz (2018) as an instructional approach designed to give learners the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills through engaging in projects set

around challenges and problems they may face in the real world. Succinctly, it is learning by doing. Learners get to engage in identifying causes and solutions to real-life problems within their communities as part of their learning objective in a specific learning area or a combination of learning areas. The approach resonates with the new curriculum's aims and objectives in that the Curriculum Framework (2015-2022) for primary and secondary education in Zimbabwe emphasizes a pedagogical and curricular shift from viewing learning as occurring only in the walls of schools to engagement in life-long activities which prepare learners to learn how to learn.

Recently, as at the beginning of 2022, in tandem with project-based learning, the department of education through Zimbabwe School Examination Council (Zimsec) has introduced Continuous Assessment Learning Activity (CALA) to complement the new curriculum in all learning institutions. CALA comprises various learning activities, projects or assessments that require learners to perform and demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and proficiency by conducting detailed research-based practical activities such as data collection, interviews, questionnaires, checklists, observations and experiments (Zimsec, 2022). The thrust of CALA is to produce learners who are critical thinkers, solutions-oriented, self-sufficient and collaborators as expounded in the goals of the Curriculum Framework (2015-2022) of life-long learning engagement. Thus, project-based learning aligns with this.

7.2 Recommendations on RBM

Recommendations on the RBM concentrate on revisiting the RBM by redrafting its guiding principles and presenting it as a transparent performance measuring tool.

7.2.1 Refining the RBM

The study recommends a revisit to the result based management approach; that this approach should be made user-friendly to classroom practices, less cumbersome by reducing paperwork involved which has turned teachers into clerks at the expense of quality teaching time. In the

same line of thinking, Pazvakavambwa (2015) and Mundondo et al. (2019) suggest crafting a home grown RBM model which responds to the contexts, expectations and needs of user schools. It is of concern that fifteen years down the line since the introduction of the RBM system, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education through its departments of strategic planning and development, research and curriculum implementation, monitoring and review of policies has not yet reviewed RBM system in operation in schools. A study of RBM models presented by Pazvakavambwa (2015) and the guidelines on developing a homegrown RBM model would inform policy planners on the suitable aspects to select from each model and combine with the needs of the Zimbabwe education system in developing a user-friendly homegrown RBM model.

7.2.2 Recrafting of the RBM guiding principles

Alternatively, the study recommends the crafting of the RBM expectations and demands so that these are sensitive to the nature of human learning theories. The RBM should be holistic in approach, encompassing all what the learners can achieve in the schooling environment, not just academic results. This endangers turning teachers into cheating. Acknowledgement should also be accorded to Sports, Drama, Art and Music because some learners are gifted in the arts and crafts fields.

The approach should be fashioned in such a manner that it takes into cognisance the human nature of the education system and not measure it by industrial expectations or yard sticks. This can be done through provision of conducive teaching and learning environments with equitable distribution of resources, materials, infrastructure and personnel. Cognisance of the varying abilities of learners taken into account and measures put in place to make sure that struggling learners get the attention they deserve. This can be achieved by lowering the teacher / pupil ratio levels allowing individual supervision and monitoring and subsequently applying assessment test commensurate with their abilities. Dube (2016) and Wadesango et al. (2017)

emphasise that large class sizes have a detrimental effect on individual monitoring and supervision, distribution and sharing of learning resources like textbooks and consequently on learners' overall academic performance.

7.2.3 Realistic motivators

The study also recommends realistic recognition of deserving schools and teachers in terms of remuneration, provision of resources and other positive means of motivating. This has been long overdue and understated. Vahamaki (2018) and Mundondo et al. (2019) concur that incentives, monetary or in kind, have a positive effect on organisations and personnel's enthusiasm to work harder to meet set targets.

7.2.4 A transparent RBM

The RBM has been used by heads of schools as a fault- finding tool and as an intimidation tactic to cower teachers into unquestioning submission. In principle the RBM has good values; however these have been eroded by its apparent abuse. Maposa (2016), Mutambatuwisi et al. (2016) and Mundondo et al. (2019) have pointed out this anomaly of using RBM as a fault finding and underscoring subordinates mechanism by supervisors in both private and public sectors. RBM should not be viewed as a witch hunt but as a legitimate measure to put schools on a global map of holistic learning achievements. This therefore calls for the relearning of RBM purposes by school administrators and heads which can be achieved through seminars and staff development sessions.

7.3 Recommendations on the New Curriculum

After the extensive analysis and interactions with the implementers of the new curriculum, the study came up with the following recommendations:

7.3.1 Further consultations and needs analysis

As common with many innovations, the new curriculum needs a few tweaks here and there to make it user-friendly and sensitive to the current needs of the school contexts and learners. In

this regard, further consultations and a needs analysis with consumers of the new curriculum (namely learners, schools, teachers and parents) needs to be done. This will furnish curriculum change architects will realistic information of what is on the ground, what is possible and applicable at this point in time taking into consideration the political and economic climates as well as the global trends. Stakeholders in education need a curriculum change that addresses current concerns, practicalities and contexts.

7.3.2 Revisions and Moderations

A number of concerns have been raised against the new curriculum, implying that revisions and moderations of areas of concern such as the implementation matrix, syllabi content, learning areas or number of subjects to be done by primary school learners and the learning time tables which have stretched beyond child developmental limits need to be undertaken. In short, there is much to be covered or learned in the course of a day, term and year. Moderation of raised issues would be a positive step towards effective implementation. While the implementation of the new curriculum is the absolute way forward, there is need for the policy makers to gather concerns from the implementers so as to effect the necessary modifications before the new curriculum is compromised.

7.3.3 Continuous staff development- capacity development

As with new programme or innovation or change, implementers need a sound knowledge base of the rationale, content, skills and methodology encompassed in the change. This knowledge can be gained through intensive staff capacity development sessions aimed at brainstorming on the effective ways of implementing the changes and overcoming obstacles and barriers. At the moment there appears to be no two way communication channel and feedback between the policy makers and the implementers. Alsubaie (2016) and Lightfoot et al. (2018) stress that intensive staff developments should not be underestimated in the implementation of innovations. Therefore continuous staff development workshops in syllabi interpretation,

implementation methods, new concepts development and fundamental understanding of the rationale are also critical necessities at this initiation phase if only to change the implementers' mind set.

7.3.4 Production of standardized sources of content knowledge

Lack of relevant sources of content knowledge, namely instructional materials like textbooks and other learning resources commensurate with the new curriculum was raised as one of the grey areas militating against implementation. It is against this evidence that the study recommends a massive production of age-appropriate sources of content and other needed resources for the effective implementation of the new curriculum. This was supposed to be done at the same time as the syllabi production and delivered to schools as a set package. In addition, a needs assessment analysis also needs to be done immediately so as to establish where resources, materials and informed personnel are needed. This will ensure equitable distribution of resources countrywide (Hapanyengwi et al., 2018). Relying on individual teachers to source content from within the confines of their context is also not ideal as this leads to disparities in concepts depth from school to school. It is therefore ideal to produce standardised sources of content like textbooks to be distributed or approved nationwide. Continuous evaluation of the new curriculum with a focus on challenges encountered is also a highly recommended. This would enable immediate solutions or interventions to the challenges.

7.3.5 Financial issues

Financial issues continually come up in implementing changes. A sound financial base of the educational institutions will limit excuses in implementing the new curriculum. It is in this light that the policy makers, through the ministry, are recommended to avail financial injections into schools for the facilitation of the new curriculum implementation expenses. Alternatively, autonomy can be given to schools to fund raise and solicit donors through their School

Committees.

7.3.6 Areas for further research

Due to the many concerns raised against the content and practicality of the new curriculum, the study recommends a back to the drawing board kind of scenario where further research into the ideal curriculum for the present day Zimbabwe should be like, taking into consideration the context, political and economic margins, technology and global trends as well as the capacity of the schools and learners.

7.4 Suggestions for Further Research

In this research study, a number of issues arose which warrant further research either by this researcher or other interested parties. Some of the issues for further research are:

1. How the results based management (RBM) can be redefined and modified to be education user-friendly or sensitive.
2. How curriculum changes or innovations can be designed and introduced in a more needs, context, and age appropriate and applicable manner.
3. Suggestions on innovative strategies that enhance learners' acquisition of knowledge and skills in light of the wide information base now readily available.

7.5 Research Conclusion

This study's point of departure was the establishment of strategies used by schools and teachers in their efforts to raise learners' academic performance against the backdrop of RBM and new curriculum. Literature and theories underpinning the study's key phenomena such as the motivation theory, performance improvement theory, curriculum change and management theories were interrogated to give guidance to and inform the findings.

The main objectives of this study were fulfilled as the strategies schools put in place to raise learners' academic performance in light of RBM and new curricula were established. Views and experiences by the teachers with regards to RBM and the new curriculum were also

discussed.

Recommendations for both RBM and new curriculum were also suggested. This study filled a knowledge gap on the strategies of raising performance amidst RBM and new curriculum implementation in schools.

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APPENDIX A

UKZN ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

27 October 2016

Ms Octavia Ndlovu 214585209
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Ndlovu

Protocol reference number: HSS/1761/016D
Project title: "Primary Schools efforts to raise performance against the Backdrop of Results Based Management Approach in Zimbabwe".

Provisional Approval - Expedited

I wish to inform you that your application in connection with the above has been granted provisional approval, subject to Gatekeeper permission being obtained.

Kindly submit your response to Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair), as soon as possible.

This approval is granted provisionally and the final approval for this project will be given once the above condition has been met. Research may not begin until full approval has been received from the HSSREC.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/px

MIN. OF PRY. & SEC. EDUCATION
HUMAN RESOURCES (DISCIPLINE)
01 FEB 2017
P.O. BOX 737, GWERU
ZIMBABWE

cc Supervisor: Dr Sadhana Manik
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
cc School Administrator: Ms B Bhengu-Mnguni, Mbalenhle Ngcobo, Philisiwe Ncayiyana, Tyzer Khumalo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 **Facsimile:** +27 (0) 31 260 4609 **Email:** ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

1910 - 2010
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: Edgewood, Howard College, Medical School, Pietermaritzburg, Westville

MIN. OF PRIMARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION (MVURWI DISTRICT)
DISTRICT EDU[redacted]
03 FEB 2017
P.O. [redacted] KWEKWE
7 [redacted] 23962

APPENDIX B

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

All communications should be addressed to "The Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education"
Telephone: 733006
Telegraphic address : "EDUCATION"
Fax: 794505

ZIMBABWE

Reference:C/426/3Midlands
Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
HARARE

13 January 2017

Octavia Ndlovu
School of Education
Edgewood Campus
Kwa Zulu Natal
South Africa

Re:**PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE: KWEKWE DISTRICT: FITCHLEA, KWEKWE AND GOLDRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOLS.**

Reference is made to your application to carry out research at the above mentioned schools in Midlands Province on the research title:

"PRIMARY SCHOOLS EFFORTS TO RAISE PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT APPROACH IN ZIMBABWE AND THE NEW CURRICULUM IN ZIMBABWE"

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director, Midlands Province, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school. Where students are involved parental consent is required

You are also required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.

[redacted]

MIN. OF PRIM. & SEC. EDUCATION
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
MIDLANDS
01 FEB 2017
P.O. BOX 237, GWERU
ZIMBABWE

Dr S.J Utete-Masango
SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
cc: PED – Midlands

PERMANENT SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND
SECONDARY EDUCATION
2017 -01-
P.O. BOX CY, 121 CAUSEWAY
ZIMBABWE

MIN. OF PRIMARY &
EDUCATION
DISTRICT EDUC
03 FE
P.O.
ZI

[redacted]

APPENDIX C

MIDLANDS PROVINCE CLEARNCE

All communications should be addressed to "The Provincial Education Director"
Telephone:054- 222460

Fax: 054- 226482

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
P.O Box 737
GWERU

01 FEBRUARY 2017

~~Mr/Mrs/Miss~~: OCTAVIA NDLOVU

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

EDGEWOOD CAMPUS

SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE

Permission to carry out a Research on:-

PRIMARY SCHOOLS EFFORTS TO RAISE PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT APPROACH IN ZIMBABWE AND THE NEW CURRICULUM IN ZIMBABWE

In the Midlands Province has been granted on these conditions.

1. That in carrying out this you do not disturb the learning and teaching programmes in schools.
2. That you avail the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education with a copy of your research findings.
3. That this permission can be withdrawn at anytime by the Provincial Education Director or by any higher officer.

The Education Director wishes you success in your research work and in your University College studies.

[redacted]
Education Officer (Professional Administration And Legal Services)
PFOR PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR: MIDLANDS

MIN. OF PRIMARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION (MWEWA) DISTRICT EDUCATION
03 FEB
P.O. BOX 679, MWEWA
ZIMBABWE TEL: 239

APPENDIX D

HEADS OF SCHOOLS CONSENT LETTER

Social Science College of Humanities University of KwaZulu Natal

Edgewood Campus

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR HEADS OF SCHOOLS

My name is Octavia Ndlovu (Ms). I am a Social Science PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, South Africa. I am interested in finding out how schools have responded to the Results Based Management Approach and what measures your school has put in place to boost the grade seven pass-rate. I am particularly interested in studying cases in Kwekwe Urban District. As one of the school heads in the said district, you are one of my case studies. To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions.

The research instruments I will be using to collect data are:

1. Interviews
2. Document Analysis of past and present pass-rate and rating precisely those of 2005, 2009/10 and 2014
3. Document Observation of the school policy and Mission Statement with particular reference to remediation.

Please note that:

- ✓ Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your input will not be attributed to you in person but reported only as a participating head of school's opinion.
- ✓ The interview may last for about one hour and document analysis and observation can be done inside 30minutes.
- ✓ Any information given by you cannot be used against you and the collected data will be used for the purposes of this research only.
- ✓ All documents will be stored securely at the University of

KwaZulu-Natal in the Social Science archives of the School of Education for a period of 5 years and thereafter destroyed by shredding.

- ✓ You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- ✓ Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.

If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate by ticking where applicable whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

Equipment Used	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Video equipment		

[redacted] My email is octaviandlovu85@gmail.com. [redacted]

My supervisor is Dr. S. Manik who is located at the school of Social Science, edgewood Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email – manik@ukzn.ac.zaphone number - +27 312603706

Alternatively, the research office of the university can be contacted. Their details are: HSSREC, Research Office, Govan Mbeki Building, Westville Campus. Contact Ms Phumelele Ximba Tel: 031 260 3587. Email: ximba@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

APPENDIX E:

CONSENT LETTER FOR GRADES 7 & 3 TEACHERS

Social Science College of Humanities University of KwaZulu Natal Edgewood Campus

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR GRADE 7 AND 3 TEACHERS

My name is Octavia Ndlovu (Ms). I am a Social Science PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, South Africa. I am interested in finding out how teachers have responded to the Results Based Management Approach and the strategies they have put in place to boost the grade seven results. I am particularly interested in studying cases in Kwekwe Urban District. As a grade seven teacher in the said district, I am interested in asking you some questions.

The research instruments I will be using to collect data are:

4. Interviews
5. Document Analysis of class pass-rate schedules and scheme-plans
6. Observation of one exam preparation lesson

Please note that:

- ✓ Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your input will not be attributed to you in person but reported only as a participant's opinion.
- ✓ The interview may last for about one hour and document analysis and observation can be done inside 30minutes.
- ✓ Any information given by you cannot be used against you and the collected data will be used for the purposes of this research only.
- ✓ All documents will be stored securely at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in the Social Science archives of the School of Education for a period of 5 years and thereafter destroyed by shredding.
- ✓ You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop

participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.

- ✓ Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.

If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate by ticking where applicable whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

Equipment Used	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Video equipment		

[redacted] My email is octaviandlovu85@gmail.com. [redacted]

My supervisor is Dr. S. Manik who is located at the school of Social Science, Edgewood Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email – manik@ukzn.ac.zaphone number - +27 312603706

Alternatively, the research office of the university can be contacted. Their details are: HSSREC, Research Office, Govan Mbeki Building, Westville Campus. Contact Ms Phumelele Ximba Tel: 031 260 3587. Email: ximba@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

APPENDIX F : PARTICIPANT'S DECLARATION FORM

DECLARATION

I.....(full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project and I consent to participating in the research.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research at any time, should I so desire.

……. ……

Signature of Participant

APPENDIX G:

HEADS OF SCHOOL STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

My name is Octavia Ndlovu (Ms), a Social Science PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus in South Africa. I am interested in finding out how schools have responded to the Results Based Management approach and what measures they have put in place to improve the grade seven pass rates. I am interested in studying cases in Kwekwe Urban District Schools. As one of the School Heads in the said district, you are one of my case studies. To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions. You are assured that the information you will provide will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. You need to be honest in giving your views and feel free to ask if you do not understand anyquestion.

Question 1

What are the qualifications and years of experience of each of your staff teaching grade 7?

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Question 2.

What are your views regarding results management?

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Question 3.

The Results Based Management policy currently in place in schools expects good results from the grade seven National exams, how has your school responded to these expectations?

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Question 4.

These measures that you have put in place at school, how have they played out in terms of the quality of results in the past two years?

2014……

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2015……

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… Question 5.

In any school learning class, there are always those learners at risk of failing, what is the school policy with regards to these learners and remediation?

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Question 6

What would you suggest as the best strategies of achieving good results?

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APPENDIX H

GRADE SEVEN AND THREE TEACHERS' SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

My name is Octavia Ndlovu (Ms), a Social Science PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus in South Africa. I am interested in finding out how teachers have responded to the Results Based Management approach currently in place in schools and what strategies teachers have in turn put in place to boost their grade seven classes pass rates. I am interested in studying cases in Kwekwe Urban District Schools. As one of the teachers in the said district, you are one of my case studies. To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions. You are assured that the information you will provide will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. You need to be honest in giving your views and feel free to ask if you do not understand any question.

Question 1.

How long have you been teaching grade sevens and what are your qualifications?

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Question 2.

What are your views regarding results management?

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Question 3.

The Results Based Management policy currently in place expects good results from the grade seven National exams, how have you as a teacher responded to these expectations?

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Question 4

These measures that you have put in place in class, how have they played out in terms of the quality of results in the past two years?

2014…….

2015…….

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Question 5

In any class learning, there are always those learners at risk of failing, how do you deal with it?

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Question 6

Do you have any suggestions you may want to put forward regarding the best strategies of achieving good results?

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APPENDIX I : SIMILARITY REPORT